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To my mother Evelyn Thapelo-Thula with great love

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ABSTRACT

Botswana has the unusual reputation of being the only country in Southern Africa that has experienced consistently high rates of rapid economic growth since independence. Researchers emphasise this exceptionality, and many times the case of Botswana has been invoked to support the thesis that the feasibility of development in the Third World hinges on the existence of compatible political democratic structures and economic developmental efforts.

The dynamics of internal development, however, have by and large been neglected, giving rise to undue and often misleading generalisations. This thesis is a critique of the Botswana post-colonial development model. It deploys a structural approach to dissect and analyse the economic development of Botswana in an historical perspective.

Development literature is replete with macro-economic analyses that purport to illustrate how the Botswana state achieved optimal economic gains through prudent management of the economy and political liberalisation. However, there is, as yet, little else to indicate how the state has broadened the set of beneficiaries - especially amongst the peasantry. The present study demonstrates how agrarian transformation, stimulated by widespread borehole technology in the face of consistently available revenue from a booming mining sector, has influenced social relations of production and class differentiation in Botswana. It shows how the state ruthlessly exploited available revenue to sustain its hegemony - ensuring the preservation of a minority ruling class coalition and the marginalisation of well over two-thirds of the population in the process. The analysis thus demonstrates that Botswana, just like other mineral-rich African countries, has failed to direct development towards the rural sector. It essentially debunks the myth surrounding the exceptionality of the Botswana state.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AG	Answer Group
ALDEP	Accelerated Land Development Programme
ARADP	Accelerated Remote Area Development Programme
ARAP	Accelerated Rainfed Arable Programme
ARDP	Accelerated Rural Development Programme
BAMB	Botswana Agricultural Marketing Board
BDC	Botswana Development Corporation
BDN	Botswana Daily News
BDP	Botswana Democratic Party
BFP	Botswana Freedom Party
BHC	Botswana Housing Corporation
BIP	Botswana Independence Party
BLDC	Botswana Livestock Development Corporation
BLP	Botswana Labour Party
BMC	Botswana Meat Commission
BNA	Botswana National Archives
BNF	Botswana National Front
BoB	Bank of Botswana
BPAL	Bechuanaland Protectorate Abattoirs Limited
BPC	Botswana Power Corporation
BPP	Botswana Peoples Party
BPU	Botswana Progressive Union
BSAco	British South Africa Company
CCO	Campaign Consultation Officer
CDC	Colonial Development Corporation
CDC	Commonwealth Development Corporation
CDF	Colonial Development Fund
DAO	District Agricultural Officer
DCs	District Councils
DRP	Drought Relief Programme
EAC	European Administration Council
ECC	Economic Committee of the Cabinet
ECLA	Economic Commission For Latin America
ERDS	Extra Rural Dwellers
FAO	Food and Agricultural Programme
FRD	Food Resources Department
GC	Grazing Committee
GCB	Government Computer Bureau
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
GoB	Government of Botswana
HIES	Household Income Expenditure Survey
IDM	Institute of Development and Management
IFP	Independent Freedom Party
IFP	International Food Programme
ILO	International Labour Office
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LDCs	Less Developed Countries
LG	Local Government
LLB	Lesedi La Botswana
MFDP	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
MLGL	Ministry of Local Government and Lands
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MVA	Manufacturing Value Added

NAC	Native Administration Council
NDB	National Development Bank
NDP	National Development Plan
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NICs	New Institutional Economics.
NICs	Newly Industrialising Countries
NPE	New Political Economy
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PDL	Poverty Datum Line
PWD	Public Works Department
RADP	Remote Area Development Programme
RADS	Remote Area Dwellers
RC	Resident Commissiонер
RDU	Rural Development Unit
RECC	Rural Extension Co-ordinating Committee
RIDS	Rural Income Distribution Survey
RLC	Radio Listening Campaign
RLG	Radio listening Group
RoB	Republic of Botswana
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SASSC	Southern African Social Science Conference
SLOCA	Service to Livestock Owners in Communal Areas
SRDP	Special Rural Development Programme
TGLP	Tribal Grazing Land Policy
TLA	Tribal Land Act
UDF	United Democratic Front
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
USF	United Socialist Front
WB	World Bank
WUC	Water Utilities Corporation





Road	
Railway	
District Boundary	
National Park	
River	

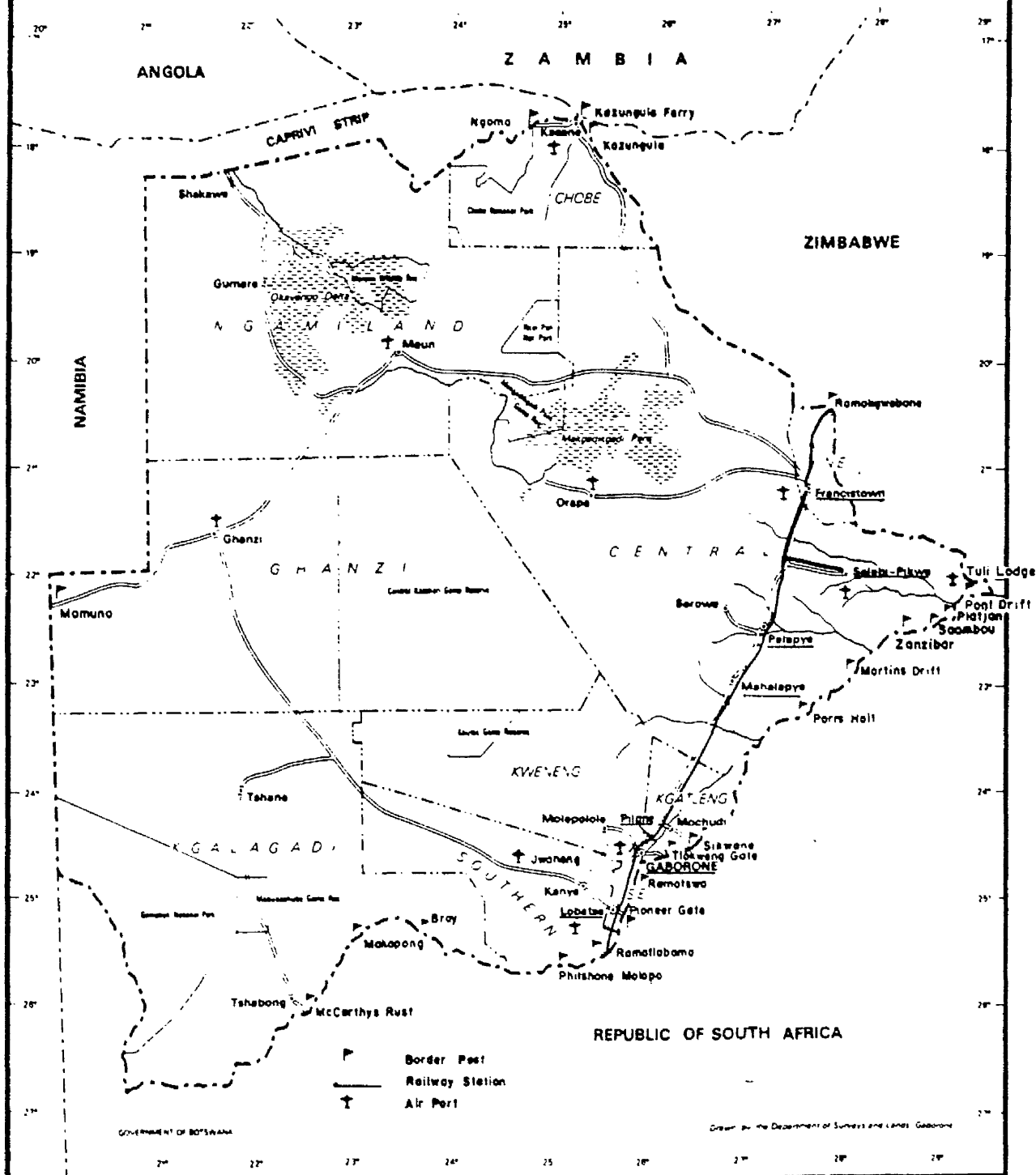


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CHAPTER ONE

BOTSWANA IN PERSPECTIVE : PRELIMINARY REMARKS

1.1 Aims of the Thesis

The state in Botswana has managed to negotiate one of the most favourable deals with the multi national corporations involved in the exploitation of its vast mineral resources; viz, De Beers Mining Company and the Anglo American Corporation of South Africa. Details are provided in Chapter 3. Since the 1970s, massive revenues have accrued to the state treasury. However, the country's post-independence development has been characterised by heavy dependency on the export of one commodity (diamonds) and ever-widening income inequalities. The state has been captured by powerful pressure groups with vested interests in mining, cattle and urban employment; to the detriment of prospects for rural development.

Politicians, bureaucrats and members of the liberal professions have consistently used the agency of the state to promote the economic interests of their groups. Until quite recently the bureaucratic-political elite coalition was so strong that it managed effectively to "insulate" the state from societal pressure groups. The articulation of the grievances of economically disenfranchised groups like Remote Area Dwellers (RADs), small farmers, female-headed households, low-income wage earners and the urban poor still rested in the hands of numerous disorganised opposition parties, non-Governmental organisations (NGOs) and a weak press. The common interests of the ruling coalition lie in both the cattle industry (largely still very much a traditional sector of the economy) and modern capitalist entrepreneurship, the latter range from trading stores to property development and other lucrative businesses in the urban centres. Evidence of favouritism towards those with political clout is apparent in heavy subsidies for the livestock sub-sector, massive infrastructural investment by the Government in mining, and a wage policy that favours the most experienced and educated civil servants, professionals and a foreign dominated private sector. The rural sector in general, and the small peasant farmers in particular, have suffered most from this state-led but prejudicial development trajectory. The purpose of this study is to explain how and why this happened and the implications for future development policy and prospects.

1.2 Geographical and Historical Background

Botswana is a landlocked country, situated in the centre of the Southern African plateau, and surrounded by Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Its mean altitude above sea level

is 1,000 metres. The country's total land mass (area) extends to 581,730 square kilometres, approximately the same size as that of Kenya, France and the U.S. state of Texas. The 1991 household population census shows that the country's population has tripled from less than half a million in 1966 to some 1.3 million people in 1991.

The climate of the country is semi-arid, with a summer rainfall regime (October - March) varying in amount from 250mm per annum in the south-west, to an estimated 600mm per annum in the north. Rainfall in Botswana is extremely unreliable. One-third of the country in the east comprises an undulating plain with upstanding hill massifs developed on ancient precambrian rocks, commonly termed the hardveld, whilst the remaining two-thirds is covered by sediments of the Kalahari Group, mostly Kalahari sand. This area is termed the sandveld.

Most rainfall takes the form of short, intensive showers during the October - March period, which is the local summer season. Much of the rainwater is lost due to rapid drainage and high evaporation. There is a high temporal and spatial variability both between wet seasons and within summer rainfall months themselves. This variability is of critical importance to human use and development, a factor recognised in the national motto "pula" (rain).

In addition to the irregularity of rainfall, drought is a recurring hazard. In the past, Botswana has experienced a drought in seven out of ten years, one of which has been severe in the extreme entailing famine conditions and a substantial loss of livestock - the 1960-66 drought.

The endemic nature of drought conditions makes farming a highly risky venture. Temperatures are typical of a continental climate, with high diurnal and seasonal changes. Average temperatures in the capital city (Gaborone) area, range from 33°C in January to 22°C in July, average minimum temperatures from some 19°C in January to 5°C in June. Extremities often occur and temperatures drop below freezing in the southern and central parts of the country in June and July, and may exceed 40°C during the summer months. According to Moyo et al (1993), there may be in excess of 3,250 hours of sunshine annually. Evapotranspiration may reach 2,000mm per annum, exceeding precipitation by a factor of four or more. This factor is critical to the maintenance of natural and agricultural vegetation systems.

Botswana can be divided into three broad ecological zones. The eastern zone has relatively good soil and just sufficient rainfall for some dry land crops. Nearly 65% of the rural population lives there. The second ecological zone is the Okavango Delta, a swamp area covering some 9,700 square kilometres in north-western Botswana. The Okavango is rich in wildlife but has poor soil. Finally, the Kalahari sandveld, which is a semi-arid savanna stretching over the whole

of the central, southern and western parts of the country is suitable for extensive cattle grazing if under careful management.

With its population of approximately 1.3 million, the country has a population density of 2.3 per square kilometre, the third lowest in the world. However, the population is increasing rapidly at a rate of 3.5% per annum, the highest rate in sub-Saharan Africa. Population is unevenly distributed, with the bulk of scattered peasant communities living in the hardveld, particularly within the vicinity of the Gaborone - Francistown transnational rail line (the only one in the country). Although an estimated 76% of Batswana are still rural dwellers subsisting on agricultural production, the population is becoming increasingly urbanised.

The provision of education, development and social overhead capital in general for the burgeoning population, 50% of which is under the age of fifteen and therefore dependent, places considerable strains on the infrastructure of the country. Botswana has a relatively homogeneous population compared to other African countries. Most inhabitants are members of Setswana speaking tribes or clans. The official languages are Setswana and English, the latter being the medium of instruction and main language in Government. There are significant minority ethnic groups, including the highly educated Bakalanga in the North East District and significant portions of the Central District, "Basarwa" (who constitute 5% of the population and are among the poorest people in the country) in the more remote areas of the Kalahari, and Baherero in the north west, as well as a small number of citizens of Asian and European origin.

Botswana's early history is largely unknown, but archaeological discoveries suggest that parts of the country were inhabited at a very early stage. Settlement in Botswana extends back into the Palaeolithic Age, with the development of a cattle-based economy as far back as 200 AD. The Setswana speaking groups arrived in the region in a series of migrations between the seventeenth and the early nineteenth centuries, pushing earlier hunter/gathering communities, like "Basarwa" and Bakgalagadi, westwards into the sandveld. This hunter/gathering people may have entered the general area of Southern Africa during the middle stone age some 30,000 - 50,000 years ago.

The colonisation by Tswana speakers of their essentially marginal land was cemented in the late nineteenth century by the evolution of their strong political structures. Three factors appear to have been critical in the growth of Tswana chiefdoms; war, trade and strong chiefly leadership. The need to ward off external expansion, especially Zulu military aggression in the wake of the Shakan revolution, demanded and legitimised the establishment of strong chieftain leadership to provide effective protection for the subjects. This period of conflict coincided with the development of Tswana chiefdoms as centres of trade in Southern Africa.

The advent of European Commerce in the Southern tip of the continent effectively placed the Tswana chiefdoms in a strategic position to regulate the flow of commerce to regimes north and east of their own territory. It was because of its strategic position that the British imperialists granted Botswana protectorate status in 1885, to preserve the road to the north (see Chapter 2).

The chiefs dominated all significant forms of collective action in their respective communities. Among his subjects, the chief was

... at once ruler, judge, maker and guardian of the law, repository of wealth, dispenser of gifts, leader in war, priest and magician of the people (Schapera, 1984).

When missionaries entered their territories in the early nineteenth century, the Tswana chiefs, as religious leaders, very quickly expressed interest in this new spiritual force, partly to ensure that the conversion of their subjects to the new religion did not serve to undermine traditional authority. Christianity and commerce were, however, to have profound influences on the rise of nationalism in later Botswana and become definitive features of the post-colonial economy, with negative effects on the institutions and influence of chieftainship.

1.3 Methodological Aspects

Steve Curry (1992) explains the main features of a case study as follows:

A case study is an account and analysis of particular events and decisions. It draws on issues that have actually been faced or are presently being faced. It informs in a direct and understandable fashion. It can ensure that ideas and theories are kept in touch with the world of practice (p. 125).

Generally, case studies are problem-oriented. A case study has a specific focus; for example, it may explore, as we do here, agrarian transition in a Third World state. Boundaries are placed on case studies, whatever the scale of the case study, by limiting them in time. In other words, a case study will concern itself with events and conditions during a specific period of time; taking cognisance of the economic context changes with respect to both production conditions and Government policy. For instance this study examines agricultural transition in Botswana since independence in 1966, in the context of economic, institutional and policy changes; referring to earlier years only to explain the inherited colonial legacy. Curry emphasises that:

By restricting its focus in place and time, a case study relies on a considerable degree of detail, both to inform and to analyze. Concentrating on a specific focus requires a clear account of the main issues and problems, illustrated with actual circumstances... The

drawing of conclusions requires justification in terms of the specific details of the case... The specific focus of case studies, and the details involved, allows case study analysts to determine their own approach to presentation and analysis... In summary, a case study investigation involves collecting relevant information sufficient to describe a specific situation and to understand the main problems or decisions involved (*ibid.*, p. 126).

In other words a case study: (i) informs the reader about actual events or policies; (ii) is oriented to actual problems or decisions, depicting the way in which they were approached and opening up the possibility of improved approaches; (iii) because of its focus on specific problems or decisions, it uses a lot of institutional data; and (iv) a case study is restricted in time and place. Overall a case-study approach seeks to provide insights from experience, and not to investigate general tendencies.

But, why should an analyst use a case study? Can a single case study contribute to theory building? We have already established that the case-study approach deals with the particular and not the general. This obviously raises the problem of relating the circumstances or conclusions from a case study to broader theoretical issues. Now, given this weakness of a concern with particular circumstances, the question may be asked in what circumstances would it be appropriate to choose the case study method of analysis? There are several circumstances in which case studies might complement or substitute for other forms of analysis. Apart from the general value of investigations in depth that characterise such studies, their specific focus is crucial for analyzing cross-country variations in economic performance. They are particularly useful when economic regularities are difficult to identify (Curry, 1993). Where economic conditions are variable, or countries are undergoing some major changes, case studies may yield more insights into economic events than comparative or cross-national statistical methods.

For instance, despite concerted efforts by economists to address the problems of economic development in the Third World, we are still not agreed on why some countries develop faster than others. The development record in the less developed countries (LDCs) since the 1960s is varied. Some countries, notably the Asian Newly Industrialised Countries (NICs), have been success stories, achieving rapid growth in per capita income and the alleviation of poverty. In contrast, import-substitution industrialisation in Latin America has brought more problems for countries like Argentina, Brazil and Mexico. The latter have retained the social dislocations associated with urbanisation and early industrialisation to the point of aggravating them. While the typical record in tropical Africa has been one of economic decline, and often stagnation, there have been notable exceptions like Botswana and Mauritius. Economic policies that have been successful in some countries have failed in others. How are we to account for these differences in policy performance? How can policy choices and outcomes be explained? There seems little

point in chasing the "regular" as broad theoretical perspectives do, when economic conditions and principles are being turned on their head.

Another circumstance, partly related to the one discussed above, where a case study is very useful is a situation where economic events are heavily influenced by policy changes by Government. Some countries, like Zaire, can even have two Governments which are not operating in tandem. Surely, there are times when those theorists who emphasise the general over the particular seem to be unaware of the mammoth task facing them. By exploring the origins of Government policy, analyzing the information pertaining thereto and the perceptions on which decisions were based, and their consequences, a case study may have a broader significance for economic progress in general. Another bonus in case studies is that they provide no specific answers: a phenomenon unfortunately misconstrued by others as a weakness. The crux of the matter though is that no theory can provide answers to the complex divergence of economic phenomena in modern societies. Prescriptive theorisation can, within its own scope of over-generalisation, lend itself to devastating criticisms, intellectual schism and even misconceptions to the point of outright futility and ridicule. Such has been the fate of orthodox Marxism. Case studies have a value for those understanding them. Sharing insights with others facing similar problems is a major reason for undertaking case study. To this end Bradshaw and Wallace (1991) rightly point out that:

... case studies are not atheoretical; to the contrary, they help inform general theory and explain conditions that deviate from traditional theoretical explanations. One important way that such studies contribute to general theory is by illuminating phenomena that challenge scholarly consensus on a particular issue (p. 155)

The case-study approach should therefore be regarded as an opportune way of learning more about the complexities of the problem examined and developing further the existing theoretical frameworks and their explanatory power. A case-study examines the historical, economic, political and cultural features of the country under review. It is of significance where initial knowledge of a particular case is insufficient to place it in a theoretical context. Case studies are generally used to test the partial validity of "grand" theories, generate new beginnings in theory or at least new branches of existing theory (*ibid.*, pp.161-163). By implication, therefore, a case study necessarily requires that a more holistic approach be undertaken.

A tension in much of the history of development economics has been the desire, on the part of social scientists to be both scientific in their approach and analysis (ensuring an element of objectivity), and useful in the service of development purposes at the same time. This tension is perhaps no way lived out more than in the works of Sen, Myrdal and Hirschmann (see Sen,

1981, 1983; Dreze and Sen, 1990; Myrdal, 1968, 1970; Hirschmann, 1981b, 1993 and Wilber, 1992). These works, borrowing from fields as diverse as possible (political sociology, political science, history, law and mainstream economics itself, among others) clearly differ from the conventional approach of standard economics. The emphasis by Sen (1981), for instance, on individual entitlements and human capabilities is a clear departure from mainstream economic analysis. The same can be said of Hirschmann's methodology. The latter provides lessons and insights that have come to be incorporated into mainstream theory; from backward to forward linkages to the role of "exit and voice" (what has come to be associated with "disengagement" and "incorporation" in the African political economy of development; (see Chapter 4). Hirschmann's (1993) approach to explanation is best understood as a holistic pattern model. For the holistic approach, explanation of reality cannot depend upon the application of universal laws. Rather successful transformation is explained by identifying its place in a pattern that is characterised by the on-going, and never-ending, processes of change in a given system. The more formal models of mainstream economics, of late based on positivism (empirical verification based on logical deductions from the application of formal methods in the analysis of phenomena, which produces models that are capable of yielding law-like statements), cannot handle the range of variables, the specificity of institutions, and the non-generality of behaviour encountered in development.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is organised into seven chapters. The organisation of chapters is chronologically sequential and it is apparent that the analysis is strongly influenced by a "historical periodisation perspective." This is mainly because the thesis is in essence a study of Botswana's economic development in historical perspective. The case-study analytical approach, used in the dissertation as outlined above, also depends upon a structural-historical approach. Consequently, the analysis proceeds from the colonial period to the post-independence era, and this pattern is evident in all the chapters - even though the focus is mainly on the period 1966-1996.

Chapter 2 presents a critical analysis of both colonialism and underdevelopment theory. The argument is that the current interpretations of colonialism and underdevelopment with regard to the political economy of development in Botswana are analytically inappropriate and do not adequately account for social change - especially in the rural sector of the economy. The chapter provides an internally directed analysis of colonial development. It illustrates how colonial development projects, especially the introduction of British borehole technology, and attitudes towards capitalist development, in London and the Bechuanaland Protectorate, articulated with patriarchal, historical and primitive modes of production leading to the

establishment of distinctive antecedents to the enclosure movement of the post-independence period.

Chapter 3 discusses the evolution of notions and conceptions of land tenure and demonstrates the structural constraints that inhibited a break, by the post-colonial state, from inherited colonial structures of land tenure. The chapter demonstrates how the interface between social science and policy-making in the 1960s and the 1970s provided an ideological consensus that formed the basis of land allocation and land use in subsequent years. The analysis reveals that while social scientists and development practitioners intended land reforms to prevent environmental degradation in the future, their theoretical prescriptions were subverted by the state whose latent intentions were to use rural development programmes as a means to penetrate the rural sector politically so that it could expand its presence and support base. This stated objective was achieved through the introduction of the Tribal Grazing Land Policy in 1975. The socio-economic and political impacts of the Tribal Grazing Land Policy have had far-reaching consequences as illustrated in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

Chapter 4 provides an analysis of the political penetration of the rural sector by the state. The analysis basically shows the significance of political analysis in understanding the post-independence development strategies in Botswana. It debunks the theory that Botswana is a "developmental-state" by providing theoretical and empirical evidence to demonstrate how the state-led drive for rural development stalled in the face of entrenched interests that have strong historical roots. The latter have always been, and continue to be, based in the small but powerful livestock sub-sector. The chapter reveals how the evolution and expansion of the state enterprise sector provided a firm basis for social stratification and a distinctive mode of class formation in rural Botswana between 1966 and 1996.

Chapter 5 explicitly examines in a selective way certain political consequences of the political economy of agro-pastoral commercialisation in post-independence Botswana. It discusses in detail the effects of rural development programmes on target groups like Remote Area Dwellers, minority ethnic groups and the rural unemployed. The picture that emerges is one of a "retreating state" as the rural poor use electoral means to punish the Government for the ills that continue to haunt them as a result of Government economic policy since the formal attainment of independence from Britain in 1966.

Chapter 6 attempts to highlight several aspects of Government policy relating to issues of distribution and inequalities. It focuses specifically only effects of Government initiated mass-based agricultural programmes on ethnic minorities other than the San. Chapter 7 presents the

main findings of the present study and points out their implications for policy analysis relating to the political economy of development in post-independence Botswana.

CHAPTER TWO

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF PEASANT DIFFERENTIATION IN COLONIAL BOTSWANA: A RE-INTERPRETATION

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is organised into several sections. The first part is a critical appraisal of development literature on Botswana. In this section, we discuss two schools of thought that continue to dominate social science discourse in Botswana. We start by providing a critical analysis of underdevelopment theory, which is the dominant, or more popular, theory in Botswana development literature, and conclude that its analytical framework is inappropriate. The last part of section 2.2 examines the revisionist argument by Steenkamp (1991) which challenges the former theory and attempts to depict colonial rule in Botswana as having been a positive force. Section 2.3 is an analysis of the nature of colonialism, development and nationalism in colonial Botswana.

In section 2.4 of this chapter there is a brief discussion of pre-capitalist modes of production and how they articulated with colonial capitalist relations of production, culminating in the evolution of distinct social classes which profoundly influenced the direction of development during the colonial period and after. Section 2.5 concentrates on Tswana "cattle feudalism" and demonstrates how the introduction of British borehole technology provided an antecedent to the enclosure movement of the post-independence period. In section 2.6 we look at the evolution of an internally directed liberal political regime in colonial Botswana and how the emergent political elite set the development agenda for the post-independence period. Finally, we discuss the evolution of local government structures in the rural economy in the wake of the nationalist upsurge for independence status.

2.2 Background to Contending Perspectives

A survey of development literature on the transformation of the rural economy of Botswana suggests that this is the most researched, but ironically, still a highly contested area. In broad terms there seem to be two established traditions in the literature. The first tradition traces the phenomenon of rural change to the pre-colonial period and is largely associated with the works of Parson (1980, 1981, 1983 and 1984)(1). The major premise of this approach is based on the Neo-Marxist argument that colonial underdevelopment determined both the evolution and transformation of capitalist relations of production in rural Botswana.

Commenting on the recent political economy of development in Botswana, Parson (1984) argues that:

The history of colonial Botswana provides a background to development in the contemporary period, and the environment (economic, social and political) with which the Government of the newly independent country of Botswana was faced was the product of this history. But the same history also reveals the underlying dynamics that govern the changes in society. The new Government of Botswana itself, in other words, was part of this history, and post independence changes in it and the nation were based on the preceding period (p. 33).

In a subsequent, but clearer, restatement of this thesis, Parson claims that:

The environment created during the colonial period was one of underdevelopment. All development in the powerful British Empire centred in Britain itself, which led to underdevelopment of its constituent units. For Bechuanaland, the underdevelopment was dramatic as the protectorate's economy and society were largely focused on developing the mining and manufacturing economy of South Africa (*ibid.*, p. 33).

According to this thesis, Botswana suffered unremitting neglect or deliberate underdevelopment under British colonial rule. Whatever developments took place in the Territory during this period, spanning over 80 years, were designed to benefit sub-imperialist interests represented by South Africa and Northern Rhodesia in the region. The High Commission Territories of Bechuanaland, Lesotho and Swaziland were thus turned into labour reserves through the use of coercive taxation, labour repression and restrictions on economic activities by the indigenous African populations. The colonial administration used political power to determine the relative fortunes of Africans vis-à-vis European settlers. Deprived of their land and forced to pay tax to the colonial Governments, Africans in the High Commission Territories had no option but to sell their labour in the more prosperous settler colonies (see also Palmer and Parsons, 1977). The more radical exposition of this thesis suggests a process leading to linear proletarianisation of peasants in colonial Bechuanaland as more than half the population was at several times allegedly estimated to be working in South African mines and farms (Cliffe and Moorsom, 1980).

As oscillating patterns of migratory wage labour became more characteristic of many people over the years, the Tswana people were compelled to send both cattle and labour to the region's growing industrial centres; a process which grossly undermined peasant production. Colclough and McCarthy (1980) observe that, while in other Colonial states of the region taxation was introduced primarily to create a black labour force which could be utilised in the expanding industrial sectors of these economies, in Bechuanaland the motivation was inspired

by a single need to raise revenue to finance colonial administration. The aim was to raise revenue for the upkeep of a fundamentally backward colonial possession. In Bechuanaland, this was facilitated by the fact that neither the small pocket of resident European settlers nor the colonial administration itself was troubled by a shortage of labour. The colonists only wanted to prevent a commitment to continued budgetary subventions to the Protectorate indefinitely. In order to achieve this objective, the Bechuanaland Colonial authorities were prepared to co-operate with the mining houses in South Africa in the exploitation of cheap Tswana labour (Murray and Parsons, 1990 and Massey, 1980).

There are two conclusions that can be drawn from these observations. First, British colonial policy in Bechuanaland Protectorate was premised upon the doctrine of indirect rule and minimum expenditure. Consequently, colonial rule in Botswana had a minimal impact compared to most of Africa. The underdevelopment thesis in essence purports to illustrate that this imperial parsimonious policy resulted in the underdevelopment of the territory in the long run. The fact of the matter therefore seems to be that colonial policy had a negative impact on the Bechuanaland Protectorate as far as development was concerned. The reason commonly advanced for the latter phenomenon is almost always associated with the territory's geopolitical position. Being of no economic significance to the imperial power, Bechuanaland only experienced development of a special kind: one that merely helped to promote the realisation of British imperialist interests in the region.

However, this conclusion, if it is true at all, raises a very interesting question. It is a question that has been conveniently avoided up to now by various commentators on the political economy of development in colonial Bechuanaland. If there is any simple correlation that can be drawn between underdevelopment, wrought by indirect rule and minimum expenditure on the one hand, and the concomitant promotion of colonial interests on the other, why did the Protectorate suffer most from Crown rule compared to other British possessions in Africa? In other words, is it true that the Protectorate's colonial experiences were markedly different? There is an inconsistency in this perspective.

The inconsistency arises because the underdevelopment hypothesis implicitly acknowledges the social reproduction of labour in Bechuanaland as a result of taxation induced labour migration. It also suggests, by so doing, that economic backwardness was a consequence of positive colonial administration. In reality we should assume that since Bechuanaland suffered most from colonial neglect, i.e. unwillingness on the part of the colonial administration to establish politically penetrating and economically extractive institutions in the Protectorate, as it did in the neighbouring settler colonies of Southern Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa, Bechuanaland should not have experienced colonial underdevelopment. Left to its own devices,

the Protectorate should have taken advantage of Pax Britannia by accelerating the developmental momentum that the underdevelopment hypothesis claims existed prior to the advent of European colonialism.

This observation leads us to the logical conclusion that underdevelopment in Bechuanaland was not a consequence of colonial domination *per se*. It therefore must have emanated from, among other factors, the dynamics of internal developments. In other words, it would appear that the inconsistencies inherent in the underdevelopment analytical framework stem from either a misconception of the factors behind underdevelopment or a misunderstanding of the process of development itself.

In fact a close study of development literature on colonial Bechuanaland reveals a catalogue of misconceptions and misinformation. To begin with, there is a serious misunderstanding of the nature and function of colonial policy. The failure to conceptualise the functional role of colonial development programmes arises from the evident disregard of various theories of colonialism and how the latter, in spite of short term disruptions, eventually acts as a catalyst for development (see Foster-Carter, 1976; Meier, 1984; Brewer, 1990 and Fieldhouse, 1986). In short, the charge of unmitigated neglect and consequent "underdevelopment" simply arises from a misconception of the process of development itself. Besides, there is insufficient evidence to indicate that it was colonialism *per se* which led to the alleged "underdevelopment".

The second conclusion that comes from a review of this literature is that there was no development policy in colonial Bechuanaland as exemplified in the labour export-oriented, or labour reserve status of the territory. The assumption behind this argument is that the colonial administration promoted labour migration principally because it wanted to recover the revenue involved in running the Protectorate. However, we are told, this hampered internal developments and particularly undermined peasant production. Was there a zero-sum relation between the labour export economy and internal development? This is one question that the underdevelopment theorists need to address. Finally, the same hypothesis claims that the country inherited almost no development infrastructure at independence because, in the words of Parson (1984), the Protectorate's economy and society were largely focused on developing the mining and manufacturing economy of South Africa. Overall one observes, as mentioned above, that presumably state interventionism in colonial Bechuanaland was merely a manifestation of geopolitical imperialist interests.

The second school of thought in Botswana's development literature marks a radical departure from the conventional characterisation of the colonial period as one of benign neglect. In other

words, it seeks to rebut the suggestion that Bechuanaland was a "Cinderella of the Empire." Steenkamp (1991), confining his argument to the 1930's when Charles Rey was Resident Commissioner of the Protectorate, tries to demonstrate that the latter "responded to the collapse of the old economic system - never very supporting of high nutritional standards - with a comprehensive development strategy focusing on water resources and the revival of the cattle industry" (p. 292).

Under the guidance of Charles Rey the colonial state ceased from being a prisoner of capital (regional, South Africa), but tried to enhance rural production and organise exchange. While acknowledging that development projects at the time tended to enhance socio-economic differentiation, Steenkamp counters the suggestion that this was evidence of underdevelopment by pointing out that it was the uneven development of capitalism in colonial Bechuanaland which was to blame. The failure of development in most parts of the country is attributed to "indigenous opposition and the influence of official attitudes (in London and at a local level) hostile to capitalist enterprise."

In a devastating criticism of underdevelopment theorists Steenkamp (*ibid.*) claims that:

While the aid colonial Bechuanaland received was inadequate, relative to her needs, the underdevelopment theorists' assertion that it gained nothing and lost much during this period is incorrect. Even if we accept their doubtful proposition that pre-colonial Botswana was self-sufficient, the claim that the colonial substitute - external dependence - was disadvantageous to the Tswana is based on the spurious belief that colonial rule, being undemocratic could not be in the interests of the indigenous people (p. 298).

On the question of concerted resistance to capitalist enterprise in Bechuanaland, Steenkamp gives the example of Tswana opposition to efforts by the British South Africa Company to gain formal control of the territory in the 1890's (2). In his view, company rule would have transformed the protectorate into a white settler state based on capitalist agriculture as had happened in Southern Rhodesia. Similar political pressures also kept Bechuanaland out of the Union of South Africa. In conclusion, Steenkamp observes that uneven capitalist development stemmed from the "political weakness of the colonial state", the imperial ideology of "anti-capitalism" or "autocratic paternalism", which sought to preserve pre-capitalist modes of production in an effort to placate and appease traditional Tswana authorities.

Thus the lack of development in Bechuanaland, prior to the appointment of Charles Rey, cannot be explained away as the expected consequence of South African accumulation. Even the introduction of taxation was progressive in that people were forced to raise cash and engage in surplus production, or wage labour - both of which encouraged individualist

accumulation and helped to undermine the communality of pre-capitalist society. The failure of capitalist penetration in Bechuanaland should therefore be attributed to both contradictions of internal capitalist development and political opposition within the territory and from London.

This chapter, while not entirely endorsing the arguments put forward by Steenkamp's revisionist analysis, seeks primarily to debunk the notion of a unique "cliché colonialism" in Bechuanaland, whereby the Territory remained, according to Marxist historians, economically backward and trapped in what Murray (1994, p. 8) calls "a virtually changeless time warp". In contradistinction we seek to demonstrate, by tracing how petty commodity producers survived and reproduced in the colonial period, that African agriculturists producing agricultural commodities for the market (especially cattle, but also the occasional crop) embraced the values of entrepreneurship wrought by colonialism. Studies on the question of whether peasants in a colonial environment optimise profits are abundant and need not confine us here. For a review of the literature on peasant studies see Lipton (1968), Scott (1976), Haggies et al (1986), Berry (1976) and the more compelling recent work on post-independence peasant economic behaviour by Hyden (1980). Nevertheless, we try here to demonstrate that Tswana people thrived on rational calculation, i.e. they were market-oriented and their survival during the colonial period was further enhanced by the retention of traditional forms of redistribution that promoted a moral economy which was to transcend the colonial period itself to the present (3).

In short, British colonialism in Bechuanaland was progressive in many more ways than conventional wisdom may suggest. It promoted and intensified already existing social relations of production. "Underdevelopment" if it could be called that in the case of Bechuanaland was a result of inter-related factors: (i) the legacy of an inappropriate and often unsupportive traditional society and culture whose ethos were characterised by particularistic obligations to individual accumulation (4), and (ii) the uneven development of colonial agricultural capitalism itself in the territory due to both the above mentioned factor and (iii) a paternalistic imperial ideology fostered by the colonial Government, especially the colonial office in London in order to avoid confrontation with elements sympathetic to the traditional establishment among the scattered Tswana polities. However, these "constraints" to the evolution of colonial capitalism were pre-empted by the enterprising efforts of traditional Tswana political elites and colonial attitudes in the Territory. The latter became particularly apparent in the 1930s with the advent of British borehole technology and increasing budgetary subventions from London for institutional development - save for the war period.

2.3 Critique of Perspectives on Colonialism, Underdevelopment and Nationalism in Bechuanaland

(a) The South African Context

The publication of Arrighi's (1970) compelling study of the proletarianisation of African peasants in Southern Rhodesia resulted in a number of stimulating texts which took as their object of inquiry the development of agricultural capitalism in Southern Africa in general and the historical transformation of rural relations in particular (Trapido, 1971; Bundy, 1972, 1977; Wolpe, 1974, 1980; Morris, 1976 and Palmer and Parsons, 1977). Any efforts to provide in-depth analysis of these texts would be a disservice given the size of the region they address. Rather, it is suggested that an investigation of the nature of their theoretical orientation and the major issues raised ought to be analysed in the light of their contribution to our understanding of the impact of capitalist development in the region in general and Bechuanaland in particular. Specific attention is directed to the impact of colonial domination on "peasant" commodity production.

Almost all writers in this extensive body of literature were overwhelmingly of a radical leftist tradition that has been termed "Radical Political Economy" (Neocosmos, 1993b). Neocosmos differentiates between the more "structuralist" political economists (for example, Wolpe and Morris) and the "realistic" historians (for example, Bundy) (5) within this tradition, but still maintained that their literature has been overwhelmingly written within a common theoretical terrain or problematic.

Generally, these writers, who perhaps may better be described as Marxian historians, contend that; (i) the characteristics of the contemporary agrarian question in Southern Africa assumed their form during the colonial period, (ii) the agrarian economies in non-settler colonial territories, including Bechuanaland, were primarily "labour reserves" specifically designed to serve the interests of metropolitan capital, (iii) the agrarian question in the region, as exemplified through massive land alienation and racist domination, has been concerned with direct oppressive relations between the colonial state and the peasantry, and (iv) the contradictions of capitalist accumulation in South Africa (labour coercion, land taxation and alienation, the creation of Native reserves, etc.) systematically eroded the existence of peasant production resulting in a process of linear proletarianisation of African peasants. However, it should also be noted that much of the more recent scholarship attempts to emphasise the diversity of colonial experience, the survival of a section of independent peasantry even if transformed, and the importance of peasant struggles from below.

Neocosmos (1993a) rightly observes that the major weakness in the approach of these Marxian historians was that throughout much of the 1970's they concentrated their studies on labour migration, particularly insofar as the mining and manufacturing industries of the region were concerned. The political economy of rural petty commodity production, on the other hand, was either ignored or assumed to have been destroyed in the struggle to sustain the economic imperatives of South African accumulation. Commonsense however dictates that if the "labour reserve" or "labour producing economies" provided the source of the migration process for the last hundred years, as Parson (1984) claims, then some modes of peasant agricultural production must have prevailed in these peripheral economies. Otherwise how can one account for the reproduction of labour in these colonial economies? A peculiar example of this phenomenon is found in the so-called "peasant miracle" in Zimbabwe (Phimister, 1988). The ability of a small stratum, in both regional and class terms, of the peasantry in Zimbabwe to produce a regular crop surplus in most years since independence, has dealt a serious blow to the linear proletarianisation thesis.

Another weakness of underdevelopment theory is that it not only assumes capital to be omnipotent and self-serving, but also claims that there is a zero-sum relation between the centre and the periphery. In the words of Murray (1994), assessing a somewhat similar approach to the study of colonialism in South Africa:

In the macro-structuralist account the main layers are impersonal, somewhat 'Naturalised' social forces like class struggle, capital accumulation and markets that assume lives of their own and march to their own tune, wreaking havoc to the countryside and riding roughshod over those unfortunate souls that stray in the path (p. 17).

The arguments that economic progress among Africans in the settler colonies and the High Commission Territories was impeded because of the "drain of surplus", the mechanism of unequal exchange and the employment of various extra-economic forms, while undoubtedly true, are open to dispute in theoretical terms (6). According to one critic:

For such a drain to retard economic development it must be an absolute drain, not simply an 'unequal' transaction that nevertheless leaves both sides better off than before, or better off than they would otherwise have been (Warren, 1980, p. 141).

Finally most writers in this tradition assume an "apparent political stasis" with respect to rural producer communities. Struggles for equal economic development are assumed to be non-existent unless "a peasant uprising" occurs.

It would appear that there is still a need to demonstrate that the contradictions between indigenous rural economic, political and civic institutions had evolved in response to mercantile trade and the formation of kingdoms in the region prior to colonisation, and those instituted by colonial powers, are responsible for the state of rural economies in Southern Africa - especially agrarian transformation. We examine these contradictions in the light of Botswana's experience.

(b) Colonial Political Economy of Botswana

Underdevelopment theory, initiated by Baran (1960) and later developed and closely associated with the official and semi-official publications of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), emerged out of the need to address the economic backwardness of Third World countries, what Frank (1969) described as "development of underdevelopment" implying either economic stagnation or retrogressive development. The ECLA theorists argued that "underdevelopment", as distinct from "undevelopment" in the LDCs did not arise from some original state of affairs as orthodox theory had it. The sources of underdevelopment were inherent in the direct relations between the metropolitan powers and their colonial subjects. The major contention by dependency writers was specifically that underdevelopment was inherent in the very historical process through which the capitalist countries of the West had developed (see Hoogvelt, 1982). The contemporary international division of labour, based on comparative advantage, restricted Third World economies to specialising in the production and marketing of raw materials whose terms of trade were assumed to be persistently unfavourable.

A familiar argument was later developed for Africa by Amin (1972 and 1976), and this theory has subsequently been applied to colonial Botswana in a number of studies (see Picard, 1985, 1987; Parsons, 1984; Cooper, 1982 and Molutsi, 1986). Marxian commentators on the political economy of colonial Botswana typically divide Southern Africa into two: a sub-metropole (South African industrial economy), which experiences "normal" capitalist development, and a periphery (constituted by rural areas in black South Africa and neighbouring colonial states), which experiences Frankian "development of underdevelopment" syndrome. The sub-metropole, being the centre to which capitalist development is directed, extracts surplus in the form of forced labour from the latter and in the process generates stagnation and underdevelopment.

In the case of Bechuanaland, the process of colonial underdevelopment is usually presented as progressing *en bloc*. Hermans (1974), former Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of

Finance and Development Manning and currently governor of the Bank of Botswana, reflecting on the financial history of the country between 1900 and 1973 laments that:

It is quite clear that nothing occurred between 1885 and 1955, which contributed significantly to Botswana's economic and financial development... A low level equilibrium could be said to have existed during that period. The policies of the British Government, moreover, did not recognise political and economic development as an objective... it was a passive period, devoted to the avoidance of involvement, to the maintenance of the status quo (p. 106).

Commenting on the state-initiated developments in the territory during the colonial period Picard (1987) dismisses the same as "paltry" and indicative of a "parsimony that was unparalleled in the British Empire" (p.117). Colclough and McCarthy (1980, p. 23) attribute the alleged neglect to the doubtful suggestion that British presence in Bechuanaland was not motivated by a search for exploitable resources but, rather, in view of their interests to the north and south (7). Other arguments actually border on the absurd. Halpern (1965) maintains that: "Having reluctantly assumed responsibility for the High Commission Territories, Britain proceeded to neglect them totally for fifty years" (p. 108).

These arguments raise serious questions. If Britain was not interested in Bechuanaland, why did it impose the imperialist mandate on the territory? (8). Assuming that it had economic interests to the north and south to protect, as Colclough and McCarthy (1980) claim, then how significant was the Bechuanaland protectorate for these imperialist ventures? Surely if it was as important a strategic buffer zone as these writers maintain then one would seriously call into question the argument of colonial neglect. Also problematic is the contention that official and local opposition to capitalist enterprise in Bechuanaland Protectorate helped to preserve pre-capitalist modes of production thus "enabling Bechuanaland at independence to cross a development threshold" (9). Was the alleged preservation of the pre-capitalist modes of production an indication of the failure of colonial capitalism or a manifestation of its success? Given that post-independence Botswana has constantly pursued a capitalist path of development, how did the development of capitalism in Botswana "articulate" with primitive forms of capital accumulation? (10) In particular, what were the basis of the pre-capitalist modes of production and how did they "articulate" with capitalist agriculture to create the existing relations of production in the rural economy?

Various existing characterisations of the colonial political economy of Botswana are inadequate. A more historical/structuralist approach which seeks to address the role of the state, given its preponderant presence in the economy since the pre-colonial period, as will be indicated later, may help us to put matters in perspective. Both the colonial and post-colonial state needs to be distinguished and the policies pursued periodised. Agents of the state rarely

think and act in like manner. Economic historians have constantly maintained that the fact that Bechuanaland did not have an administrative centre of its own but was administered from South Africa meant that development could not have taken place meaningfully within the territory. This argument is somewhat misleading and is in many ways a reflection of inability or failure to conceptualise the colonial state adequately.

Of course, it is a moot point whether the absence of a capital inside the Protectorate seriously prevented the development of an environment of selfhood and nationhood. But it might be remembered that of the three High Commission Territories of Bechuanaland, Lesotho and Swaziland (BLS), it was the first which received its political independence; and it is the only one which is not a monarchy having successfully adopted the system of Westminster parliamentary-type democracy. These issues now need to be raised and analysed systematically.

2.4 The Pre-Capitalist Modes of Production: and the Basis of Class Formation

A study of state formation and interventionism can hardly be said to be complete without an analysis of individual, class or group interests and the manner in which the latter relate to the means of production in a given socio-economic and political environment. This generalisation is, perhaps in some limited way, as true for "primitive" societies as it is for the modern nation states. In two authoritative works, political scientist Crick (1987 and 1992) makes the point that all but the most primitive societies have differing interests and values, and that it is the mark of civilisation to attempt to reconcile them by political institutions. In some ways the same can be said of traditional Tswana polities.

Botswana's early history is largely unknown, but archaeological discoveries suggest that parts of the country were inhabited at a very early stage. Settlement in Botswana extends back into the Palaeolithic Age, with the development of a cattle-based economy as far back as 200 AD. Until the early 18th century the inhabitants of what is now Botswana were semi-nomadic hunters and gatherers. The earliest states in southern Africa may have originated in present day Botswana about 1000 AD (Denbow, 1982, 1986 and 1988). Archaeological evidence suggests that centralised cattle-keeping and nucleated human settlement of numerous peoples in southern Africa were indicative of the existence of states with centralised wealth and authority (Murray and Parsons, 1990). But very little is known about these inhabitants. What is now established is that a characteristic feature of state formation in pre-colonial Botswana was a system known as *Mafisa*. This refers to a system whereby cattle were loaned in trust from patron to client, in return for tribute, services and political allegiance. For a long time clients could not slaughter or market *Mafisa* cattle since they were held in trust and

remained the property of the patron. However, they could use them as draught power for ploughing and milk them, and an accumulation of such cattle could enhance one's prestige in society thus allowing the furthering of political and economic interests.

A clear understanding of the manner in which the Mafisa system functioned is significant for our analysis, not only because it was an organisational principle among the most powerful Tswana principalities, but also because it was at once a mechanism for both accumulation and redistribution among the various polities. It was also a useful safety valve against absolute poverty and rebellion. In this sense it constituted a unique moral economy whereby a distinct survival safety mechanism for the disadvantaged members of a community also acted as an effective device for domination by a small but prosperous traditional elite i.e. it enhanced their political hegemony tremendously while it lasted. As Parson (1981) observed, pre-market relations in cattle were characterised by a semi-feudal system, whereby chiefs granted usufructuary rights in cattle to kin and close associates in return for their political loyalty. Thus, besides serving an economic function, the Mafisa cattle constituted the contractual basis of political relations between the chiefs and their subjects.

However, this system started to collapse in the 19th century with the intensive penetration of Cape mercantile economy into Tswana territory. It should be noted though that Cape mercantilism, as an external force, did not cause the disintegration of this system. Internal developments and conflicts laid foundations for the eventual decline of the system. For instance, many "vassals" who had accumulated numerous *Mafisa* cattle began to perceive claims on the part of successive chiefs to ultimate rights over them as undue interference in their freedom to participate in trading thus taking advantage of the commercial opportunities afforded by the advent of coastal mercantilism. In essence, Cape mercantilism merely acted as a catalyst in the decline of what was almost a moribund social organisational principle. Chief Kgari of the Kwena tribe was for instance believed to have precipitated his own downfall at the hands of a small group of large cattle-holders in 1859 (Parson, 1981) because he continued to make indiscriminate ownership claims to all cattle.

It was against this deteriorating background that most chiefs, realising that cattle ownership had become the main internal threat to their political authority, declared some limited rights to private ownership on the eve of the advent of British colonialism. But

... the liberalisation of private property relations was a slow and cumulative process dependent on the scale of productive opportunities in the market as well as upon the progressive extension of citizenship rights even to some serfs by 1911... it was the large cattle owners who gained the most by freeing of livestock from royal ownership, by realising cash from sales of cattle and purchasing imported goods first from the long distance wagon traders and later from established European trading points... furthermore, largeholders used cash to purchase additional cattle

from small holders, effectively building their herds even further (Lawry, 1983 p.5) (11).

The above observations lend colour to the supposition that by the turn of the last century, social relations in cattle among the Tswana took on increasingly less importance relative to cattle as a commodity, as well as a means of subsistence.

Setswana-speaking groups, one of the major divisions of the Sotho group of Bantu-speakers, arrived in Botswana in a series of migrations in the period immediately preceding the 18th century. These groups were more economically advanced and well politically organised. Consequently, they managed to push the earlier hunter-gathering *San* inhabitants westwards into the Kgalagadi Sandveld. Most of the *San* were ensnared by these intruders and disparagingly called *Masarwa*, a pejorative term denoting servitude; European settlers were later even more inaccurately to call them "Bushmen" (see Chapter 5 and 6).

According to Murray and Parsons (1990) the *Mafisa* System became the organisational principle among the Tswana states as they spread across modern Botswana. Strong political institutions consequently evolved among these communities in the nineteenth century due to coastal trade, wars of conquest and subjugation plus the emergence of chieftainship as the most effective organ of national mobilisation and statehood. The rise of Zulu militarism in the wake of the Shaka revolution would appear to have legitimised the establishment of strong chiefdoms capable of protecting both subjects and property (Omer-Cooper, 1966).

It is this period of conflict which coincided with the development of the various Tswana chiefdoms. These chiefdoms soon found themselves strategically placed as centres of trade in Southern Africa. The advent of European commerce in the Southern tip of the continent effectively located them in a position to regulate the flow of commerce to regimes north and east of their territory. Economic historians have observed that the political expansion of these chiefdoms resulted mainly from the fact that "trade in ivory, furs and feathers, and the introduction of the horse, wagon and gun, account[ed] for the articulation of the 'feudal' states of Botswana into the expanding mercantile economy of the Cape... an articulation that was to take the eventual political form of a British Protectorate over Bechuanaland in 1885" (Murray and Parsons, 1990).

Meanwhile, as weaker chieftains, like those of the Kalanga, Kgalagadi and Kaa, were incorporated into Tswana societies, the *Mafisa* system was used to keep them in servile status. Some scholars have rightly characterised this political function of *Mafisa* as constituting "cattle-feudalism". Social and economic differentiation seem to have been distinctive features

of pre-colonial Tswana life. In the background of these primitive forms of accumulation lay the figure of the Chief.

The anthropologist Schapera has studied Tswana societies for well over fifty years and provided a corpus of information that has been consulted and used by academics of different persuasions and from different disciplines. Among his subjects, the chief was

... at once ruler, judge, maker and guardian of the law, repository of wealth, dispensers of gifts, leader in war, priest and magician of the people. (Schapera, 1984, p. 62).

According to Schapera a tribe was not a closed group and it was not necessarily homogenous; culturally, linguistically and socially. Schapera distinguished in descending order of political power and wealth, several ranks of social classes:

... nobles (dikgosana), agnatic descendants of any former local chief; commoners (badintlha, bathanka), descendants of aliens incorporated long ago; and immigrants (bafaladi, baagedi), people of groups more recently admitted (Schapera, 1984, p. 36) .

The chief's rule was, however, not absolutist. Chiefs ruled by the consent of their subjects and through self-appointed councillors plus some members of the noble class to pre-empt challenges to their power. A fourth group existed of such socially and politically "inferior" status that they had no rights of their own, were usually attached to "masters" to whom they paid tribute and provided free labour. Virtual hereditary serfs, if not slaves, these subjects, referred to by Wiseman (1974) as "the Peaceful Outsiders", have over the years remained in a state of servitude. The traveller Chapman after meeting a group of them wrote that:

They call themselves dogs, pack oxen and horses of Sekomi (sic) [the Ngwato chief] and never think of aspiring to any other position. Dogs because they hunt and kill game for their masters, pack oxen because they must carry home the proceeds of their hunts for hundreds of miles, and horses because they must act as spies and run from one post to another with the least information (cited in Steenkamp, 1991, p. 302) (12).

Thus contrary to accounts that differentiation in the rural economy only dates back to the colonial period, this phenomena has long been a feature of Tswana societies. The distribution of resources, especially cattle and land, was very skewed even in the pre-colonial economy.

The chief was charged with the responsibility of allocating and distributing land. In effect the land belonged to the chief even though he could not alienate any part of tribal land to outsiders without the consent of his subjects. It was against this background that Schapera (1952) suggested that this role of the chief be conceived as one of "a trustee holding land for his tribe". The pattern of

land use was similar among Tswana tribes and this determined land rights for members of each tribe (Ngongola, 1992a). In fact legal studies have established that three modes of customary land tenure were common to all Tswana ethnic groups, viz; land was earmarked for residential, arable and grazing purposes (Frimpong, 1986).

The village compound and its immediate surroundings constituted the residential area. Beyond the latter were arable agricultural holdings. Grazing land stretched from the end of arable land, in theory *ad infinitum*, but common logic dictates that it practically ended where it met the boundaries of other tribes; unless of course war was planned. Actually, recent archaeological findings around Toutswe Hill in the Central District confirmed the existence of such settlement patterns dating back to 1000 AD (Denbow, 1986).

It would appear that although the basis for differentiation in Tswana society has always been the property rights appertaining to cattle, access to grazing land, social class (especially, one's political position in society), and to labour engaged in cattle-herding, most families had rights of access to some agricultural land. Individual accumulation was possible even though senior tribesmen and the chief could exact tributary demands and thus undermine the process. The advent of colonial rule, its expanded encashment of rural produce (largely cattle) and labour, and the different colonial interpretation of customary Tswana law transformed both property forms and socio-political relations.

The most interesting feature of Botswana's pre-colonial and colonial relations of production is the fact that they were characterised by a dynamic cattle economy, sanctioned by an ancient historical tradition and socio-cultural ethos, rather than field crop production as was the case in neighbouring South Africa and Zimbabwe (Palmer and Parsons, 1977) and indeed most parts of the world (Harriss, 1982). In the case of Botswana cattle accumulation and access to expansive areas of grazing thus largely determined rural differentiation. To contemporary observers, however, this was to be expected; as Schapera (1943) remarked, "the country is notoriously more suitable for ranching than for the cultivation of crops, which, indeed, is possible only in certain areas..." (p. 209). How then did this mode of production, based on land and cattle accumulation articulate with the capitalist relations of production "introduced" by the colonial state?

2.5 The Colonial Period: Stagnation and Polarisation?

Economic historians generally tend to characterise the period prior to World War II as one of unrelenting underdevelopment in the Bechuanaland Protectorate. The argument seems to be that a colonial development policy only evolved in the post war period as a response to

demands for a New Deal by ex-servicemen. Bechuanaland made tremendous sacrifices for the war effort. Some 10,000 adults were conscripted for the war out of a population estimated at 300,000 - 400,000 (Murray and Parsons, 1990) (13). A levy of £89,000 was realised for the war while both labour and land were redeployed for increased grain production.

Consequently, many Batswana expected a New Deal from the British in the aftermath of the war. The boom in the world economy in the decades following World War II raised the demand for agricultural products and improved technology thus making industrial development in the dependent territories possible. However, the charge of unremitting neglect in the period before the war seems to be difficult to sustain in the light of available statistical evidence.

An examination of the total funds received as grants and loans from the Colonial Development Fund (CDF) between 1929 and 1939 directly contradicts the claim by Picard (1987), among others, that the Protectorate was a victim of unrivalled parsimony. Steenkamp (1991) indicates that while Bechuanaland was given £64,394 in grants and £253,073 in loans, Nigeria, a bigger and more populous colony, received only £325,453 between 1929 and 1939. In fact Meredith (1993), using such aggregate statistics suggests that, "in most cases the smaller and poorer colonies received a greater degree of assistance than the larger and less poor, especially if per capita figures are used" (p. 492). The latter's studies actually shows that of the 50 colonies receiving these grants and loans between the years provided above Bechuanaland ranked fourteenth highest in aid received. Against this background, it may actually be more sensible to avoid unsubstantiated claims of stagnation and underdevelopment and settle for Steenkamp's (1991) general conclusion that while it is undeniable that the financial aid extended to Bechuanaland was meagre in absolute terms, in relative terms no comparisons are available to substantiate the claim that the territory suffered unprecedented forms of benign neglect before World War II.

Studies on the impact of colonialism in Africa may benefit more by avoiding the tendency to indulge in over-generalisations and treating both African peasants and European administrators and settlers as undifferentiated and well-defined groups of people. Class orientations of various social groups ought to be considered and, furthermore, the ideology and even economic behaviour of all economic and political actors attributed to both personal psychology and structural dependence within the colonial political economy and colonial state (14). In other words, constraints and incentives on both individual and collective self-advancement should be accounted for insofar as they were precipitated and determined by internally directed socio-economic and political factors.

One of the weaknesses of dependency theory as applied to Bechuanaland is the fact that colonialism is simply presented as "exploitative", wholly unrewarding to the indigenous populace and, consequently, counterproductive in all respects. In a pioneering study on this subject and approach, Warren (1980) cautioned Marxian historians against neglecting the positive contributions of colonialism to human progress; i.e. stressing the progressive role of imperialism and colonialism in pre-capitalist societies. Warren pointed out that such analysis should not involve moral judgement, but rather an objective assessment of the historical contribution of colonialism to human progress. In Warren's estimation this contribution, if rescued from the "retrospective, partial, and discriminating applications of the moral principles of late liberalism" which, "serves to obscure both the 'subjective' character... and objective effects of modern colonialism", was substantial. The introduction of taxation, provision of incentive goods and a corresponding advance in material welfare; all of which are arguably parallel conditions for the development of the productive forces were essential contributions.

An account of the political economy of development in colonial Botswana may draw profitably from the insight provided by Warren. To account for the uneven development of capitalism in both colonial and post-colonial Botswana this writer intends to demonstrate how policy interventions in the economy concretely express contemporary class relations. Without reference to the historical constitution of the modern social formation(s) it may be very difficult to explain the nature and purpose of the agricultural policies that have transformed rural relations so drastically in the most recent years in Botswana.

(a) The Nature of Tswana Feudalism

Reference has already been made to cattle feudalism in Botswana. The discussion on "feudalism" in Botswana has suffered very much from a lack of systematic periodisation. This ahistoricism arises from a partial inability to analyse the internal historical structure of feudalism in traditional Tswana polities. Unfortunately, this rather rarefied conception of the nature of pre-colonial Tswana societies tends to produce analyses which ignore the millennia of social change among the Tswana people. Dichotomous characterisations like "traditional and modern society" or "Dual Economy" are inadequate to explain capitalist penetration and the subsequent transformation of production relations among these people (see Prah, 1977).

Studies on feudalism elsewhere in Africa have benefited handsomely from the more sophisticated approach adopted, initially by a group of French Marxian anthropologists (see Taylor, 1979 and Bernstein, 1977 and 1981). The latter have clearly demonstrated the influence of political and social forms of organisation (e.g. lineage, classes, status etc.) in the "articulation" of the pre-colonial and capitalist modes of production. However, it should be noted that there is

still an unresolved debate about the relevance of applying Eurocentric notions of feudalist forms to the study of pre-colonial modes of production in Africa (Goody, 1971). Furthermore, there are still marked differences around the application of feudal concepts to African societies between some Marxian social anthropologists, who focus attention on a pre-colonial class relations and their influence on accumulation, and liberal writers whose emphasis largely relates to political structures (Crummey, 1980).

The problem of evoking feudalist concepts to account for social change in pre-capitalist societies, so evident in comparative literature (i.e. African Feudalism, Asiatic Feudalism, Japanese Feudalism, etc.), is further compounded by the fact that concepts of feudalism have different content and are, more often than not, applied differently (see Bloch, 1962). Goody (1971) identifies two strands in the literature on feudalism on Africa. The first school of thought does not make any overall comparison with medieval western Europe (i.e. it does not use analytic tools like fiefdom, vassalage, serfdom, etc.) to interpret social change in Africa. Its emphasis is rather more inclined towards aspects associated with ideology, social structure, land tenure, popular custom and religion, compounds and possessions like cattle. The second strand is comparativist and highly influenced by Bloch's summary of the generic characteristics of a feudal order. Bloch (1962) argues that:

A subject peasantry; widespread use of the service tenement (i.e. the fief) instead of a salary ...; the supremacy of a class of specialised warriors; ties of obedience and protection which bind man to man and, within warriors class, assume the distinctive form called vassalage; fragmentation of authority - leading inevitably to disorder; and, in the midst of this, the survival of other form association, family and State ... (p. 446).

Our discussion of Tswana feudalism is more associated with the former school of thought because, as the present study will demonstrate, Tswana pre-colonial societies did not possess most of the feudal properties identified by Marc Bloch and the organisation of production in Tswana societies, and indeed the distribution of their results, was markedly different. The favoured definition of feudalism, as applied to the Tswana context in the present thesis, is very much akin to Maquet's (1961 cited in Goody, 1971) conception that political systems are a feudal structure. Maquet's study was concerned with the a cattle-based economy; that of Rwanda. Maquet defines a feudality as an organisation:

based on an agreement between individuals who unequally partake in the symbols of wealth and power culturally recognised in their society. The person who, in that respect, is inferior to the other asks the other for his patronage, and, as a counterpart, offers his services. This is the essence of feudal regime ... (Quoted in Goody, 1971, p. 6).

The parallels between the pre-colonial Tswana social order and Rwanda pre-capitalist relation of production is very striking. In both systems client-patron relations were predicated on a rich cattle

economy; and the system of cattle loans was a common practice. The latter was recognised both as social organisation principle and a way of wealth accumulation.

Tswana speaking people together form one nationality; subcultural and dialectical differences do exist between the various sub-units. However, for the purpose of arriving at fruitful generalisation these relatively minor differences are usually ignored in the national historiography. Class struggles intensified among and within Tswana chiefdoms during the early part of the 19th century (c. 1810 - 1840) due to both the Shakan Revolution and the Boer trek. Economic historians have consistently taken the declaration of protectorate status over Bechuanaland in 1885 as marking the first "contact" between the latter and western capitalist penetration and influence (15). The Mfecane (called Difaqane in Sotho) wars, expressed in inter-ethnic rivalry, civil wars and unregulated territorial expansionism by powerful African chiefdoms in the whole of Southern Africa in the 19th century, radically transformed Tswana societies and ushered in new production relations. They brought in captives (Malata), firearms and an assortment of weapons in the form of pangas, arrows, assegais, spears, knives and battle axes. As all these needed iron inputs, metal-working became increasingly important, especially, but not exclusively, in Southern Botswana (16).

The development of such technology correspondingly led to the transformation of productive forces which increased agricultural capacity; for with slaves and their feudal counterparts, the better placed serfs in increasing numbers, the ploughing of land was better facilitated. Prah (1977) succinctly sums the impact of these developments:

Surpluses also tended to increase. However, being a class society, the apportionment and appropriation of above-subsistence production was differential, depending on one's class and status. All the same, consumption apart, the increase in production during the late 18th and early 19th century must have greatly advanced simple commodity exchange. Although some items like cattle, grain, metalwork, etc., had increasing exchange value, no commodity emerged distinctly as money (p. 8).

Tswana semi-feudal relations, characterised by tributary exactions, *Mafisa*, "enservment" of the politically weak and plundering of neighbours were drastically affected by the imposition of *Pax Britannica*. But most of these forms of primitive accumulation survived the impact of colonialism due to the nature of the latter phenomenon within the context of Bechuanaland.

In line with the major thrust of British economic policy towards African possessions in southern Africa other than settler colonies, more dynamic forms of class formation, beyond the nucleated lineage stratum, stalled in the face of an imperialist ideology which Steenkamp (1991) rightly dubs as "anti-capitalism" or "autocratic paternalism". Commenting on similar colonial attitudes, Berg (1964) complained that: "Economic policy in colonial Africa was most often paternalistic,

dirigiste, anti-free enterprise to the 'core'... (p. 554). It was not until the appointment of Charles Ray as Resident Commissioner to Bechuanaland in the early thirties that colonial policy openly affirmed the community of peasant production and rejected the (alleged) destructive "individualistic tendencies" of capitalist development in the periphery. But it is doubtful, as will be shown later, whether these attempts to preserve pre-capitalist society crystallised into policy and subsequently influenced the economic history of Botswana.

The penetration of relations of commodity exchange had by the end of the nineteenth century transformed the technology of peasant production in the Bechuanaland Protectorate, principally through the introduction of new farming techniques, the plough, drilled boreholes and veterinary services (Cliffe and Moorsom, 1980). In spite of the rinderpest pandemic of 1895 which killed an estimated 95% of Tswana cattle, a minority of wealthier cattle-owners and surplus producing peasants managed to proceed with the commercialisation of their agrarian production. They exploited local and South African markets, in the wake of the Anglo-Boer war, provisioning for the warring factions. However, the popular thesis that a coalition of corporate mining capital in South Africa and the colonial state in the territory effectively blocked the consolidation of this stratum of enterprising peasants, and thus prevented their eventual development into commercial farmers for many years, although partly true, is completely inadequate to explain the transformation of rural relations in colonial and post-colonial Botswana.

(b) British Borehole Technology: an antecedent to the enclosure movement of the post-independence era

Water has always been a serious constraint to development in Botswana. The significance and precious nature of this scarce basic necessity is evident in the country's motto "Pula" meaning "rain"; especially a perennial quest for rain. Its economic significance is perhaps also, nowhere more vividly apparent than in the country's currency notes which are also called "Pula". Colonial development policy in the period immediately preceding the eruption of World War II aimed at improving the economic welfare of the Tswana people. In a memorandum issued by the resident Commissioner, Charles Rey, in 1934, expressing a growing antipathy towards migrant labour, it was argued that:

The ideal [would] be to retain within the territory the majority of native labourers as a healthy peasantry, but this ideal could not be attained without the expenditure of vast sums of money in developing water supplies, training the natives in economic methods of agriculture and animal husbandry, improved transport conditions, and above all finding markets for their produce inside and outside South Africa (BNA, 1935).

Consequent to the evolution of this more internally directed economic ideology, a wide variety of development projects were carried out by the colonial state with the support of tribal local authorities. Initiated by the Public Works Department (PWD) these projects were designed to improve the cattle industry, then the only viable economic boat for the territory, and were mostly confined to communication facilities and water supplies. By 1937, some £71,440 had been made available for the construction of bridges and roads. In 1935 alone, a grant of £25,300, and a further £114,000 the following year, went into the improvement and development of water resources. By 1938 the number of sunk boreholes had risen to eighty (fifty-seven successful) as opposed to thirty-seven boreholes (fifteen successful) sunk in 1934. The results of these massive water development technologies were impressive in comparison to the pre-colonial period. As Steenkamp (1991) notes:

The one Government drill operating in 1934 was joined, four years later, by seven others. From 1935 to 1937, twenty-seven engines and pump heads were installed, one windmill, one ram, and twenty-two animal gear pumps. In this same period, one major dam (350 million gallons) and nine smaller ones were built. An additional £12,000 was used to clear water-ways in, and channel water from, the Okavango Delta to areas in the South. The aim of all these water projects was first, to meet domestic needs and second, to open up new grazing areas. In 1938 it was estimated that new supplies had eased overstocking by opening up new grazing areas for 70,000 cattle (p. 300).

It would appear however, with the benefit of hindsight, that although these projects were of a developmental nature, and well-intended, the results were clearly unintended and, consequently, produced a pattern of rural transformation and class formation that has endured to the present day.

The introduction of British borehole technology destroyed a system of subsistence agriculture based on equal rights of usufruct. Financed by the colonial state, the wells drilled by wealthier cattle owners (drilling a borehole could cost as much as £300 (17) and was therefore out of reach of the poor peasants) became the wedge of capital investment and private property rights in grazing lands (Worby, 1988). Outside the areas designated for residential purposes and arable farming the rest of the territory was potentially grazing land for Tswana people. Cattle posts (*meraka*) were usually located at fairly considerable distances from village settlements. The nature of the pasture and its accessibility to water were usually determining factors for the location of grazing stations (Ngongola, 1992a). However, permission from the chief was required for the sinking of wells within or without these areas.

Apparently, customary Tswana rights dictated that wells be regarded as common property. Communalism of tenure arose from the fact that grazing rights were the least localised or particularised and, save for the areas marked for the cattle posts and the privately-sunk wells,

rights over grazing land were far less exclusively asserted (Ngongola, 1992a). However, with the introduction of the more costly and technologically advanced boreholes, came a transformation of property relations most alien to the rural economy. A contemporary commentator observed:

All wells were formally regarded as common property, where anybody grazing his cattle in that area could water them. But it has gradually become the law that only the people digging the well are entitled to water their cattle there. Anybody else wishing to use the well must obtain the owners' permission failing which, if he trespasses, he can be ejected or punished (Schapera, 1955, cited in Worby, 1988, p. 174).

This means that subject to the minimal spacing requirements established by the chiefs, individual borehole owners were able to gain *de facto* control of large stretches of grazing land. It all depended on their capital means. These new property forms, and the socio-political relations to which they gave rise in subsequent years, provided a dialectic of class formation that came strongly to influence peasant differentiation in post-colonial Botswana as will be shown later. Suffice it to say that the resultant land-grabbing and speculation later provided the basis for the undermining of peasant production by the post-independence bureaucratic-capitalist class which saw its survival in keeping one foot in the lucrative livestock sector and another in the burgeoning urban environment. The agrarian question in Botswana, and the policies pertaining thereto, must be analyzed in the light of this broader scope of class and state formation.

It has already been noted that the cost of sinking wells, with an estimated average cost of £300 in 1932, was prohibitively expensive. Consequently, this enterprise could only be undertaken by a few already prosperous individuals. Although the political powers of chiefs and their diverse ruling class associates were undermined following the colonial administrative reforms of 1934, their economic positions were already well enhanced. The private holdings of traditional authorities, accumulated by virtue of past prerogatives of traditional office and kingship, formed the basis of large-scale commercialisation of agro-pastoral enterprises in the protectorate. Heavy investment in the cattle industry was a reflection of a widely held perception by the colonial officers and tribal authorities that the territory's comparative advantage lay in livestock production and that colonial policy should be directed toward promoting that advantage.

Contrary to the view held by many commentators that Tswana people's traditional ownership of cattle was characterised by "hoarding" (i.e undue accumulation and retention of cattle mainly for social purposes like bride wealth and prestige), evidence given by Chief Tshekedi to the Pim Commission on Protectorate development trajectory in 1933 points to a widespread, if only recent, market function for cattle production:

Pastoral development is the only real development for a native of the Bechuanaland Protectorate. The native is still largely dependent for his subsistence on

his pastoral pursuits, and in this connection cattle are indispensable to him. He also has no capital except in the shape of stock and there are no other effective development industries within his country upon which he can depend for a living. It is the ambition of every native to increase his stock.... He is not like the primitive native, but he increases his stock for commercial purposes (Schapera, 1943, p. 211).

The disposal and cash resources that large holders commanded provided the finance necessary for making investments in comparatively expensive water development projects. Lawry (1983) points out that the cost of borehole drilling, exclusive of equipping, increased considerably faster than the cost of living - from some £100 per bore in 1927 to an average of some £1000 in 1960. This explains the inaccessibility of borehole technology to smallholder farmers. Nevertheless, the introduction of this technology was a particularly welcome development to cattle barons in that underground water resources permitted the year round occupation of grazing areas previously available only during the Protectorate's erratic rainy season.

The colonial authorities sought an answer to this disturbing situation from two alternative options. Firstly, the administration undertook the responsibility of sinking boreholes in the Native Reserves with the hope that water development would benefit the community at large. Funds from the Commonwealth Development Fund were employed for this purpose and the boreholes so constructed designated as tribal property and placed under collective control. However, it would appear that these boreholes were not kept in order and "tragedy of the commons" took its course to the disappointment of many (Worby, 1988).

The colonial administration and tribal authorities attributed the above problem to lack of proper allocation of authority and responsibility. They then advocated outright ownership of boreholes (or individualised ownership) in order to promote proper management. The result was the evolution of "syndicates" viewed by both the colonial administration and the tribal elite as the best unit of private ownership and control (Peters, 1983 and 1992). According to Pauline Peters, administrative attitudes were premised on the assumption that these corporate bodies (syndicates), would ensure wide distribution of access to borehole technology and ownership thus forestalling opportunities for monopoly control and favouritist practices by the ruling Tswana upper classes. Unfortunately, while these efforts to improve the cattle industry were aimed at providing access to new forms of capitalist wealth, social and economic developments in general tended continually to confirm people in their inherited ranks (Steenkamp, 1991). It was inconceivable, for instance, that royals and their tribal councillors would easily incorporate the vast community of the peasantry into such joint ventures, or that ordinary Batswana would participate in joint economic activities on a similar footing with the politically less privileged non-Tswana speaking groups.

The development of "cattle capitalism" in Bechuanaland acted as a lever to prise loose resources, like land, cattle and labour, previously embedded in a collective heritage, into a nucleus of wealth accessible only to the rich and powerful. Wylie (1984) laments this process of uneven capitalist development and

... points to the irony that the elites accumulated inalienable private fortunes partly by invoking the traditional notion of "seniority" to confiscate property (cattle) from, restrict access (water and land) to or enforce collective responsibilities (labour) on others. A pre-capitalist idiom was used to cloak capitalist aggrandizement. Despite the obfuscating adherence to a traditional political discourse, the old elites were rapidly transforming themselves into capitalists, partly at the expense of the poor (pp. 230-231).

This process of socio-economic differentiation in colonial Botswana was fairly widespread but perhaps, nowhere was it more manifest than among the Ngwato tribe (Lawry, 1983 and Wylie, 1990).

It should, however, be mentioned that these constraints on mass peasant involvement in pastoralism did not necessarily forestall all possibilities for social mobility. There were particularly two options available for alternative income-earning viz; arable crop production and labour migration to the more prosperous colonies in southern Africa and the Union of South Africa. But both these options were fraught with dangers. Crop production was less profitable due to unfavourable climatic conditions and concomitant low yields, a problem that still haunts Botswana today. Besides, subsistence crop production also involved either ownership or at least manageable access to cattle since the latter were necessary as draught power to plough the arable fields successfully. As patronage networks, like *Mafisa*, which once provided greater functional organic links between the economically privileged strata of the traditional elite and the poorer and most vulnerable sections of Tswana principalities, began to erode in the face of intensive growth of agricultural capitalism, both cattle ownership and seasonal access to the same became increasingly difficult for most peasants.

Labour migration was a more economically and socially attractive option but for the vagaries of racial discrimination and the hazardous working conditions in the industrial centres of the region. A study commissioned by the Land Tenure Centre of the University of Wisconsin-Madison concluded that the long-term ambition of Tswana migrant workers was to achieve sufficient income from farming operations to enable them to leave the mines (Lawry, 1983). The case of Botswana thus does not support the theory of unilinear proletarianisation. Many Batswana viewed labour migration as a "seasonal" occupation only necessary to cope with the nefarious forms of colonial taxation and, more important, they appreciated the relative ease with which it facilitated the accumulation of cattle (a factor which perhaps better explains their remittance behaviour than any other) (18).

2.6 The Birth of a Liberal Order and its Impact on the Rural Economy

The genesis of a more internally directed political liberal order in Botswana can be associated with the formation of the Native Administration Council (NAC) and the European Administration Council (EAC) in 1919 and 1921, respectively. These institutions were meant to promote participatory politics by involving Tswana chiefs and elected European representatives in the formation of policies affecting the interests and welfare of the parties involved. In effect, however, the NAC was powerless since the Resident Commissioner was not bound to accept the advice of the Council. The EAC, on the other hand, was more effective because European settlers were able to influence commercial development in the territory through their articulation with South African sub-imperialism, metropolitan capital and the colonial state as well as other interest groups in commerce and mining (nationally and regionally).

Nevertheless, we do realise that, although Bechuanaland's approach to problems of pastoral change and development took a distinctively different path from strategies found elsewhere in southern Africa, especially with reference to a colonial policy supportive of the growth of an indigenous middle class peasantry, political rationality still characterised the process of agrarian transformation. European farmers in the territory were not disposed to the idea of allowing market forces to dictate the outcome of their fortunes in the colonial economy on the same terms as their African counterparts. Historically, such conflicting rationalities constituted major determinants in deciding the relative fortunes of European settlers and African peasants in most colonial dependencies (Bates, 1981 and Austen, 1987). But, in the case of Botswana, it should also be emphasised that a traditional pastoral livestock system which generated and perpetuated inequality of holdings actually helped to exacerbate a truncated colonial system.

This introduces an interesting aspect of Botswana's pre-independence political economy with respect to resource use and power relations. There were distinct conflicting economic rationalities in agricultural production in colonial Bechuanaland. Even a small pocket of European settlers in the territory could not realise the potential for joint agricultural economic activities with the prosperous and politically powerful traditional ruling classes. Instead they coalesced with their white counterparts in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia to promote their interests. This folly only became apparent after the attainment of political independence when many European farmers began to realise that their future destiny lay in Botswana and thus begun directly to seek both political and economic alliance with the emergent petty-bourgeois political elite.

Be that as it may, the EAC had more than proportionate influence over the affairs of the Protectorate. The vulnerability of the NAC became apparent in 1934, when Native Administration

Proclamation No. 74 gave the colonial administration powers to suspend chiefs if they were not performing their duties adequately. The most important provisions of Proclamation No. 74 of 1934 were: the formal recognition of tribal authorities by the colonial administration to exercise authority; the definition of the powers and duties of chiefs, a measure which included statutory control over the rule of chiefs; and the establishment of "a tribal council" comprising elected members for each tribal area under a chief. The Native Tribunal Proclamation instituted in the same year regulated the judicial powers of chiefs and their subordinates. It also formalised the tribal court system and jurisdiction by providing for "senior tribunals and junior native tribunals". Tswana chiefs objected to these changes arguing that these proclamations were an infringement upon their sovereignty and a departure from tribal law and custom in that they provided for "elected councillors" and formally constituted tribal councils and tribunals capable of challenging their powers. These objections fell on deaf ears and the two proclamations are today regarded by some as the harbingers of Botswana's local Government system which evolved on the eve of independence (see Jeppe, 1974). It also sought to replace chiefs with nominated councillors and generally conferred unlimited prerogative powers on the Resident Commissioner (19). Although the chiefs managed to prevent these administrative reforms, the actions of their colonial counterparts clearly indicated that political authority still remained within the domain of the European settlers.

The evolution of a sustainable political liberal order in Bechuanaland should be traced back to the post World War II political economy of the territory. It was during this turbulent nationalist period that there emerged two distinctive ethos for state action:

- (1) The primacy of commercial criteria, a high value placed upon compromise, stability, security, and the systematic accommodation of competing interests; and
- (2) durable patterns of elite interaction linking producers, state authorities, and external interests (Morrison, 1993, p.27)

The political and economic ramifications in post World War II Bechuanaland were so dynamic that their cumulative effects have had a decisive and enduring impact on the character of modern Botswana's national politics and the institutional behaviour of the present state. But it is important to note that political developments in the Protectorate pre-dated the World War II as exemplified in the experiences of the Ratshosa brothers of Serowe (Nengwenkulu, 1979 and Parsons, 1974). The irony of nationalist politics in the Bechuanaland Protectorate is that it was the tribal authorities who shunned the evolution of anti-colonial nationalist sentiments and not the colonial administration. The material conditions and benefits accruing to traditional elites from colonial rule as illustrated in this chapter (i.e. the nature of capitalist development in colonial

Botswana) particularly explains this conservative stand. But this is an area which needs further research.

There are several factors which were critical for the evolution of a sustainable liberal order in Botswana. First, the inauguration of apartheid as an official ideology in South Africa, following the triumph of Afrikaner nationalism in 1948, dashed any hopes of the eventual incorporation of the Protectorate into South Africa as had been anticipated by the Union Act of 1910. After World War II, there was a need to develop a more vigorous internally directed drive for modernisation and structural change. Second, the turmoil resulting from the marriage by Sir Seretse Khama, paramount chief of the Ngwato (arguably the biggest ethnic group in the country), to a white woman, aroused so much controversy as to hasten the nationalist drive for independence (20). The British, in their part, were only too eager to use these two political developments to disburden themselves of a costly dependant. However, it should also be pointed out that, at a superficial political level, the British saw in the plight of the Protectorate an opportunity to continue their traditional, but controversial, role as the bastion of liberalism in Southern Africa. This became particularly apparent in the uninterrupted flow of massive grants and loans to the territory until it obtained an independent recurrent budget in the 1971/1972 financial year.

Third, the revival of the Lobatse abattoir plant in 1954 renewed more interest in the cattle industry and was to prove decisive in the early formative years of Botswana's political economy. Meanwhile, at the onset of 1956, there was a sudden collapse of regional cattle markets. Frustrations among elite cattle owners, the Colonial Development Corporation (CDC), which funded and controlled the abattoir, and the colonial state authorities, reached such a fever pitch over cattle management and marketing that relations among them became severely frayed. In an eloquent summary of this conflict of interests between "the nascent development coalition" on the eve of independence in Botswana, Morrison (1993) identifies three fundamental dimensions of the Botswana political economy, viz:

1. The behaviour of the foreign enterprise positioned at the centre of the crisis. Due to its capacity for redefinition, the CDC was able to alter its mode of operation, accepting a loss of financial power (over the export abattoir in Lobatse, marketing channels, and massive ranch holdings) while at the same time insisting that its understanding of commercialism prevail in the internal management of the newly established Botswana Marketing Corporation. In this way, the transformation of the industry's management to a unitary and nationalised corporation proceeded without suffering any real loss of managerial or financial continuity.

2. The evolving character of the late colonial/early nationalist state, in particular the phasing of its development action. The state's late development surge, occurring as it did against the back-drop of extreme weakness, and coincident with the advance towards independence, motivated colonial authorities to take an overtly nationalist perspective and to blend its perspective with that of private elite interests.

3. Two intimately linked aspects of private elite society - the nature of the bi-racial cattle-owning elite and the independent trajectory of elite nationalist politics. A community of interest arose in the push toward independence, situated within the elite circles of the BDP and institutional fora like the BMC, which spanned elite racial categories and successfully merged diverse aspirations (the search for greater private cattle wealth, the desire to live in a cautious, pragmatic independent state) (pp. 28-29).

Meanwhile as this "development coalition" took concrete form and shape at the national level, civic structures in the rural economy were also undergoing profound transformation. The post-independence state was bent on reproducing its power at the rural level, and this desire soon found expression in a series of legislative innovations and changes that became the order of the day in rural Botswana throughout much of the 1960s and the seventies. We have already noted the significant role played by the chiefs as agents of modernisation in the colonial period in Botswana. In the post-independence era their political influence, accompanied by entrenched economic interests, taken for granted by many during the pre-independence period, was bound to clash head-on with the emerging vested interests of the capitalist-bureaucratic elite described above by Morrison (1993).

The threat posed by chiefs to the newly emerging coalition of economic classes in Botswana was so potentially dangerous that political elites seem to have decided to erode their powers slowly but gradually, thus foreclosing any possibility for co-option in the future. The state sought to achieve this objective by embarking on a series of rural development policies that were often reformulated in popular ideological terms in order to convince the rural electorate that the Government was acting in their interest, and therefore deserved their cooperation in whatever it was doing (Worby, 1988). An ideological underpinning for this strategy to pre-empt what was conceived as the "destructive" influence of chiefs found expression in Botswana's system of local Government - a system so pervasive in its nature and repercussions, that in the preceding three decades it has thrown almost all but the least influential chiefs into the fray of national politics.

2.7 The Farmer, the Politician and the Bureaucrat: Local Government and Rural Development in Botswana

Studies on agricultural development in Botswana seem to lack one essential element - the need to associate the study of local politics and local development administration, on the one hand, and rural agricultural economy, on the other. It is almost inconceivable how a study of the agrarian question in Botswana can proceed without a proper synthesis of these contending forces of motion. What are the functional relationships between local administration, politics and the agricultural economy and how have the same determined the mode of agrarian transition in the rural economy over time?

A most important model in the study of institutional development in African politics, so common in the political sociology of the 1960s has been "the theory of social mobilisation" (Holm, 1971). According to the literature on the latter subject, initiators and supporters of new political institutions come predominantly from those groups of the population which are more affected by social and economic change. Social mobilisation theorists in particular often hypothesise that the groups most likely to involve themselves in new political institutions are the youth, the more educated, wage employees and many others who are alienated from traditional society. However, when put to rigorous analysis this modern-vis-à-vis traditional perception of political participation is found wanting in the case of Botswana.

With the imposition of a British Protectorate mandate over Bechuanaland in 1885, the Tswana chiefs became the primary executive authority in local Government. The representatives of the colonial administration at the local level, the District/Resident Commissioners, confined themselves to the role of giving advice and guidance. In fact the British were so lax in exercising their authority over the chiefs that it was not until 1934 that the Protectorate Government issued any significant regulations governing the duties of chiefs. Even then, these regulations were effectively resisted by some of the chiefs and had to be substantially modified before they could be implemented.

Meanwhile, certain institutional aspects and traditions of colonial administrative policy were gaining ground in the Protectorate. In a pioneering study of the evolution of an "administrative state" in Botswana, Gunderson (1971) makes the following observation:

Colonial rule brought to Bechuanaland a cadre of Western or European civil servants. In theory, the policy of "indirect rule" posited that traditional authority was to concern itself with the traditional or African population, while colonial authority would focus on general over-rule, particularly in regard to defence (p. 223).

In his studies, however, Gunderson reveals that in reality traditional authority was eventually undermined. The result was a reorientation of:

... decision making for the social order away from local rule and towards centralised agencies. Thus a situation developed where authority for decision-making began to flow downwards from experts oriented to a Western cultural ethos towards a peasant mass restricted to traditional Tswana culture (*ibid.*, p. 223).

But as mentioned earlier the chiefs did not take all this curtailment of their powers lying down. Indeed, even today it can be argued that the existence of their residual powers is still manifest in the enduring, but anachronistic House of Chiefs (Proctor, 1968). Recently, political scientists have placed more emphasis on the extent to which traditional patterns of behaviour are integrated into new political institutions; an approach more rewarding in that old values and

perceptions of both governance and social reality as well as the traditional leaders are analyzed with regard to the way in which they affect the character of the new modes of administration and the extent to which new (rural) institutions find general public acceptance (Holm, 1971).

African self-Government was achieved at the national level in Botswana in 1965. The structure of Government designed for independent Botswana as embodied in the constitution of the country followed, with minor exceptions, the model of British parliamentary democracy. As one of the last British African colonies to become independent in the 1960s, Botswana gained a slight reputation as a dumping ground for colonial civil servants who had lost their jobs elsewhere (Gunderson, 1971) (1). Most of these expatriates were later to occupy managerial, technical and supervisory positions in Government and their policy influence has been extremely crucial as will be seen later.

A small educated elite numbering no more than 43 university degree holders, a few school teachers, clerical workers and political activists complemented the efforts of this expatriate personnel. The former constituted what Kuper (1970) called the "New Man". They comprised mostly of young but politically experienced royals and sons of influential Tswana families who had obtained their academic training in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia although a few like Sir Seretse Khama, leader of the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) and first president of independent Botswana, and the radical nationalist K.T. Motsepe (leader of the opposition splinter group - Botswana Peoples' Party) received their education in western Europe. Others like Dr. K. Koma, current leader of the opposition Botswana National Front (BNF) in parliament, and described by Holm (1971) as a romantic Leninist and naive Machiavellian, were trained in eastern Europe. Many of these so-called New Men represented the ruling group within the BDP. At independence they served in parliament, occupied senior positions in the civil service, and a few were employed to administer party structures in the rural areas. A handful were employed in the private sector which was, and still is, heavily dominated by foreign capital.

When a new constitution was drafted for the granting of self-Government to the then British Protectorate in 1963, it was decided that rapid constitutional advance should be matched by a democratic system of local Government (Jeppe, 1974). A Local Government Commission set up in the same year recommended a system of district councils of which the majority of members were to be elected on the basis of universal adult suffrage. The legal framework of local Government arose from the report of the Local Government Commission to the legislative council in 1964. This system of local Government representation was introduced by the Local Government Law, 1965 (Law No. 20 of 1965).

The Local Government Commission consisted of politicians from three parties, chiefs and civil servants and it agreed in its findings that:

... provision should be made for a nonracial representative and responsible system of local Government in Bechuanaland. The system should as far as possible be a national development from the existing system of tribal administration (MacCartney, 1978, p. 395).

However, the Protectorate Government went even further in its explicit espousal of democracy as the basis for the Local Government system arguing that:

- (i) The policy of Her Majesty's Government and the desires of the people of Bechuanaland today are the same... this means that administration at every level must be nonracial, representative and responsible.
- (ii) It is essential that constitutional development at the centre should be balanced by the growth of democratic institutions throughout the country.
- (iii) It is a matter of great importance and urgency that the territory's rapid constitutional advance should be matched by an efficient and democratic system of local Government (*ibid.*, p. 395).

This new system of local Government was, consequently, brought into operation at the beginning of 1966, just a few months before Botswana gained independence. Although its introduction was mainly due to pressures from the pre-independence administration, the implementation of the system was left to the emerging national leadership of the BDP.

The establishment of local Government in rural areas was carried out in haste due to pressures from the departing colonial power. One consequence of this hasty implementation of the system was the important decision to recognise the existing tribal entities by basing the units of rural local Government on the clan territories and by converting the clan administrative structures into the nucleus of the new District Commission staff. The direct political advantage of this new arrangement was the impression it created among the population. Many people got the wrong impression that the new system represented a development of the old traditional system rather than its abolition (MacCartney, 1978). However, most people in general, and the chiefs in particular, were disappointed in the immediate post-independence period when marked discernible trends began to emerge in the relations between the BDP Central Government and the District Commission staff. Starting with the premise that "democratic local Government" should replace the rule of the chiefs, the Government transferred a series of powers and administrative functions from the latter to elected district councillors (Jeppe, 1974, pp. 142-152).

When the chiefs responded by vigorously opposing the unfavourable decentralisation exercise instituted by the BDP, and others resigned their positions as ethnic rulers to join mainstream opposition parties (21), the Government sought to contain popular dissent by resorting to new hybrid bodies like the notorious Land Boards and District Development Committees. These two eventually took over the chiefs' hitherto traditionally sanctioned prerogative functions over land distribution and water development.

Thus, it would appear that, confronted with a choice between strengthening the pyramid of democratic institutions bequeathed to it by the previous British administration and continually stressed in its political rhetoric *ad nauseam* and relying increasingly on a purely administrative approach, the BDP Government opted for the latter.

CHAPTER THREE

LAND REFORM AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

3.1 Introduction

Several points are evident from our discussion in the previous chapter. First, there is no clear evidence that colonialism resulted in unparalleled underdevelopment in Botswana. Our analysis also shows that the underdevelopment framework is not only analytically inappropriate but also ill-equipped to account for social change within the context of colonial Bechuanaland. We would argue that relative poverty in the rural economy has been a consequence of the uneven development of capitalist agriculture, among other things, and that it was not solely determined by colonial development policy (or colonial non-development policy) as previous accounts have sought to suggest. In colonial Botswana, the existence of a traditional society and culture whose ethos was characterised by particularistic obligations to individual accumulation did itself influence the process of colonial capitalist development rather than simply being determined by it. To this end, we conclude that in spite of the evolution of a progressive agricultural development policy beginning from the 1930s, the Protectorate's traditional livestock system continued to generate inequality of holdings with respect to access to productive assets such as cattle, arable/grazing land and water resources.

Second, we note that the colonial administration failed dismally to reverse this historically sanctioned process of rural differentiation, as incumbent traditional authorities circumvented its efforts by skilfully using political office to divert revenue from Native Treasuries and tax receipts, furthering their economic interests. The difficult duty of balancing between the prosperous chiefs and their councillors, on the one hand, and the mass of the peasantry, on the other, was passed on by the departing colonial power at the attainment of independence to an emerging coalition of petty bourgeoisie political elites. Finally, we observe that, although the emergent ruling class tried in principle to use the political power at its disposal to effect a "progressive" rural modernisation process, serious contradictions and conflicts of interests arose in practice.

These internal contradictions in post-independence Botswana, which will be discussed in detail later, occurred primarily because the ruling class that came to power in 1965 was divided and also distinctive in originating from an active and direct engagement in livestock production. It is against this background of an apparent "unwillingness" by the new Government to institute

radical land reforms in the immediate post-independence period that we proceed to examine how the commercialisation of agro-pastoralism continued to influence peasant differentiation in the rural sector of the economy.

The questions we seek to address are complex and very much inter-related. Given that production relations during the colonial era were more a reflection of the political preservation of a continuing diffusion process than the initial penetration of market forces, why did the modern state fail to remove the negative forces affecting agricultural development bequeathed to it by the previous administration and promote more positive ones? Has the transitory form of the agricultural structure, the movement from a traditional agrarian society to a modern market economy, as portrayed in the previous chapter, remained a permanent characteristic of agricultural transformation? If so, is this a result of Government failure or market failure? In other words, has social differentiation in the rural economy continued to be largely determined by power relations, as was the case during the colonial period, and if so, how have these power relations themselves shifted?

3.2 Structure of the Argument

This chapter is organised into three sections. The first part of the chapter discusses colonial land reforms in the Bechuanaland Protectorate from the turn of the last century. It particularly demonstrates how these reforms, coupled with concerted efforts to promote the cattle economy through the introduction of British borehole technology, had by the 1960s laid firm foundations for post-colonial similar reforms in such a way that the latter failed to promote new patterns of distributing both land and cattle holdings. The second section illustrates how the interface between activist social science and the state in the 1960s provided the latter with a popular ideological idiom that made it possible to direct development away from the rural sector. Finally, we look at the Tribal Grazing Land Policy of 1975. Detailed analysis shows how a supposedly environmental project was adroitly hijacked by the large cattleholders and turned into a motor for propelling an historically sanctioned land enclosure movement.

3.3 Colonial Antecedents in Land Reform

After the creation of the Bechuanaland Protectorate the whole country fell under the jurisdiction of Britain through Her Majesty in terms of Bechuanaland Protectorate General Administration Order in Council, 9 May, 1891. Tribal Territories Proclamation, No.9, 29 March 1899, earmarked certain portions of the country for human occupation on the basis of ethnicity and racial classification. The proclamation originally established and defined five so-called Native Reserves for Bamangwato, Batawana, Bakwena, Bakgatla and Bangwaketse tribes.

Subsequent amendments to the proclamation eventually increased the number of these Tribal Reserves to eight with the addition of Balete and Batlokwa Native Reserves in 1909 and 1933, respectively. Barolong Native Reserve was demarcated for commercial purposes (a colonial euphemism for European occupation). The Bechuanaland Protectorate (Lands) Order in Council, 1904, and the Bechuanaland Protectorate (lands) Order in Council, 1910, created Crown lands. In 1911, for the first time in the history of the country, and to the disenchantment of some members of the ruling classes of the various scattered tribal entities, the colonial administration brought into existence legal provisions for the granting of freehold interests in land contrary to the norms and practices of customary law and traditions (Ngongola, 1992a).

In line with the new land expropriation laws a certain stretch of land was vested in the British South African Company (BSAco) in 1911 (see British Protectorate Order in Council 4 May, 1911). This precedent was followed by a succession of further unrestricted grants of individualised tenure to European settlers in the Crown lands. Although most of the freehold interests were held by companies, a considerable number of European farmers (especially South African Boer farmers) obtained large chunks of landholdings in areas such as Lobatse, Gaborone, Tuli Block, Ghanzi and the Tati districts (Frimpong, 1986). After these radical land reforms, the structure of land holdings remained largely unchanged. Progressive changes in the socio-political sphere which ultimately culminated in the evolution of centralised authority in the post war period, as indicated in the previous chapter, seem to have had a surprisingly minimal impact on the land reforms of the first half of this century. The bulk of land in all Native Reserves remained within the category of "tribal land" and it was predominantly held and occupied by peasant farmers under both customary notions of land tenure and largely legally undefined "common law notions and conceptions" imported into the Protectorate with colonial rule following the widespread introduction of British borehole technology in the 1930s (see the previous Chapter).

(a) Independence and the Rights of Tenure

After the attainment of political independence in 1966, all Crown lands fell under state control. Thus, in 1966, Botswana had parts of its land occupied under "alien" received forms of tenure, i.e. particularised interests. The majority of the land was occupied by indigenous populations under various customary and/or tenurial forms, developed for them by the colonial administration. It is ironic to note that although the Batswana suffered the same, but perhaps less sinister, forms of land alienation as the Africans in Zimbabwe, Kenya and Malawi, post-independence political elites did not institute a radical process of patrialisation (transfer of land rights from non-nationals) in the country as the others did (Ngongola, 1992a). The state was less inclined to interfere with inherited constitutional safeguards against property expropriation (Ngongola, 1992b). It is

interesting to note that all commentators on Botswana's political economy of land use and development have discreetly avoided tackling the question of the Botswana elite's ambiguous and haphazard attitude to both land as an economic resource and land reform as a function of public management. What distinctive features have characterised land reform and land use in post-independence Botswana? Has there been any profound and far-reaching reforms aimed at developing a "peasants policy" capable of promoting sustained production and welfare?

(b) Land Reform as a Function of Political Penetration

An analysis of land reform efforts in post-independence Botswana would be inadequate if reference to the contemporary intellectual environment was neglected, an omission so sadly apparent in some of the existing literature. It was mentioned in the previous chapter, that it was only a very small educated elite numbering, no more than 43 university degree holders, that occupied the seat of Government after British departure, together with the assistance of massive expatriate personnel.

The evolution of institutional and juridical mechanisms designed to improve land management in Botswana, and the effects these changes had on the peasantry, must be analyzed against the backdrop of the interface that existed between social sciences and development policy in the 1960s and the 1970s. A very controversial doctrine emerged in the late 1960s based on the notion of "political penetration". This concept was inspired by the writings of social scientists-cum-activists who sympathised not only with the weak emerging independent states and their aspirations, but also believed that research itself could make a contribution to development by providing Governments with ideas of how their programmes could be implemented and replicated more effectively in different social contexts (Doornbos, 1990). Of the adherents to this notion of the state "penetrating" society in order to enhance its capacity to implement policies, none was more explicit than James Coleman whose much quoted definition of "political penetration" is:

... that ensemble of processes by which the political-administrative-juridical centre of a new state (1) establishes an effective and authoritative central presence throughout geographical and sectoral peripheries, and (2) acquires a capacity for extraction and mobilisation of resources to implement its policies and pursue its goals, however this may be determined (Coleman, 1972, p. 3).

It must be noted that the historical conjunction of Government rural development policy and research objectives in the African experience of the 1960s and early 1970s, albeit rarely emphasised in current development literature, coincided with significant and very uncertain political developments on the continent. After independence African political rulers concentrated

tremendous efforts on securing, extending, and transforming the administrative institutions of governance introduced by their predecessors in office. We are often reminded that the monumental process of decolonisation involved the transference from the metropolis to the emerging nation states of legal-rational bureaucratic organisational institutions (i.e. of the Weberian tradition) and rules (Sandbrook, 1986). These inherited forms of the state evolved in particular social and material conditions in western Europe. Consequently, the new African political elite set out to "adapt" these institutions arguing that the environment into which they were transplanted was quite different. To this end, nowhere were these reform "experimentation" exercises more prevalent than in the sphere of land utilisation. It is against this background that we should try to appreciate the introduction of extremely controversial land schemes like Land Registration and "Harambee" in Kenya and the ambitious collectivist "Ujamaa" programme in Tanzania.

Besides the quasi-legal technical and the more intellectually inspired arguments (especially by conservationists) for land reform in post independence African societies, there has always been a latent political agenda. Confronted with mounting pressure to meet the needs and expectations of their ever-expanding political constituencies, on the one hand, and the need to contain vested economic interests, local and international on the other, many Governments faced great uncertainty and feared losing legitimacy, authority and power. The response to this precarious state of uncertainty took various forms in different countries but the underlying concern was what one political scientist has called a process of "incorporation" (Azarya, 1988). By incorporation is meant a situation whereby large segments of the population associate with the state and participate in its activities in order to share in its resources. According to Azarya, incorporation of this nature can be initiated by either individuals or socio-economic groups. It can also be solicited by the state itself as a means of penetrating into the periphery. In Botswana there is a historiographical dogma which emphasises the alleged "uniqueness" and effectiveness of the country's developmental policy and wholly attributes this to "good governance" (Harvey and Lewis, 1990). However, as we proceed with our analysis, it should become clear that Botswana's own strategy of land utilisation and management did not differ significantly from experiences elsewhere on the continent. There is a need to establish who benefits from political penetration in an environment where the emergence and class behaviour of the bureaucratic elite is uncertain as was the case in Botswana at independence, even if a particular model of administration is generally followed.

3.4 Interface Between Social Science and Policy Making in the 1960s and Early 1970s

Prior to 1970 little official attention was paid to the land question in Botswana. It has been suggested elsewhere that, during the first few years, subsequent to the granting of independence, the Government devoted most of its attention to institutional organisation rather than rural development policy (Picard, 1979a, 1979b and 1980). As Worby (1988) has observed, the belated appearance of a comprehensive policy to protect and improve the efficiency and productivity of the livestock sector in post-independence Botswana seems rather puzzling to many social scientists given the apparent historical centrality of the cattle industry to the socio-economic welfare of the predominantly peasant communities. But a deeper reading of general public policy, as manifest in the Government's five year National Development Plans and public declarations by both politicians and senior civil servants, leaves no doubt that the rationale for putting investment in the rural economy on the back burner in the early years of national planning stemmed from a popular thesis of development economics at the time.

The pervasive intellectual, some will say practical, contribution of development economics to the problems of development in Africa and other parts of the Third World deserves more attention than many economists realise or acknowledge. Some social scientists contend that throughout the 1960s institutions of higher learning in the Third World were expected by their Governments to perform the task of training and producing the manpower needed to "Africanise" the civil service and other aspects of nation-building (Killick, 1978). According to this view, Governments sought to encourage a more active interface between the academic community and the policy making establishment. They welcomed and solicited inputs from the academic community for purposes of policy formulation and implementation. This interface between the decision makers and social scientists was largely enhanced by the contemporary prevailing perception that both groups were on the same side of the struggle for nation-building and indigenisation of governance and development policies.

The irony, however, stems from the fact that this local assertiveness, born of a fervent desire to give substance to the notion of independence, was undermined by the hegemonic legacy of colonialism itself. To begin with, the preponderant presence and endurance of multiple ties and historical experiences with ex-colonial institutions presented serious challenges to the post-independence developmental initiative. This was particularly the case in the social sciences where the acceptance of conventional metropolitan wisdom and its ideological underpinnings remained dominant (Ndongko, 1994; Rasheed, 1994; Mkandawire, 1988 and Bujira, 1994). It was against these complex interrelationships that the subject of development economics came to influence the thrust of development trajectories in much of the Third World.

When development economics emerged as an academic discipline in the aftermath of the Second World, economists operated in a much more certain intellectual environment. It was possible then to believe that development in the post-colonial states would replicate the experience of those countries which had already industrialised, such as Britain, France, Germany, Japan, and the United States of America. Taking evidence from the varied experiences of these countries, economists stressed the importance of savings and capital accumulation in economic growth (Ingham, 1993). The benefits of economic growth would, with the passage of time, allow for the correction of imperfections wrought by the colonial political economy, and the benefits of growth would accordingly be distributed equitably to all through "trickle down" effects.

The socio-political context of the post-colonial environment was deemed not to be problematic and this optimism found expression in the now doomed philosophy of Ghanaian leader Kwame Nkrumah when he exhorted compatriots in the Third World to respond to the legendary clarion call: "seek ye first the political kingdom and everything will be added unto ye" (McKenzie-Kennie, 1977).

Any less developed country whose development trajectory tended to defy or simply not conform to contemporary conventional wisdom could find justification in either the economic deductionist and prescriptive theoretical postulations that were so common (Baran, 1960; Lewis, 1963; Kuznets, 1955, 1966 and Gerschenkron, 1962) or remain the perpetual traveller on an unfinished journey through the various stages of economic growth advocated by Rostow (1960, 1963 and 1971).

In spite of their varied emphases, development economists generally advocated the following policies; (i) rapid capital accumulation, (ii) industrialisation, (iii) mobilisation of underemployed manpower and (iv) an activist state committed to the principles of development planning. To all intents and purposes they were resolved to overcome the perceived problems of "economic backwardness" in the Third World by easing the disadvantages of "late industrialisation" through what Hirschmann (1958) called "a deliberate, intensive, and guided effort".

Development economists argued that the neo-classical models of analysis did not apply well to underdeveloped countries. Adam Smith had founded modern economics with a powerful argument that free markets are the best route to economic growth and the welfare of nations (Landau, 1986). But these development economists countered this market approach by contending that the role of the state (in some literature presented as a viable substitute for the missing factors of production) was more important, and the need for planning public action imperative in the underdeveloped countries. The need for a developmental state stemmed from

an assumption that markets in the latter countries functioned highly imperfectly. This assumption also reflected a hidden but naive belief that Third World Governments would behave as benevolent social guardians. Economists, literally known as "development specialists" in the field, specially invited or imported by Government, would in their schema of things serve in Government; calculating shadow prices and formulating planning models. Selfless local bureaucrats would then implement the plans (Krueger, 1974 and 1990). Surprisingly enough, these "development specialists" also implicitly assumed that coordination and administration of public sector activity would be relatively costless.

Armed with this idealism, the sons and daughters of Europe and North America left the shores of their countries for the first time in living memory not to go out and conquer or plunder other people's resources but to go and help build other nation-states in the image of their own mother countries. Some scholars may disagree with this assessment and put forward the claim that missionary activity in Africa was progressive. This argument, while tenable with regard to a few sections of the continent where pacification did lead to development, is on the whole less plausible in the sense that the long-term implications for Christian proselytisation, which process was itself not exempt from often very severe brutalization of whole peoples and their cultures, was the establishment of conditions conducive to colonisation.

The picture painted above is in a nutshell the story of how post World War II development problems were thrust upon economists, or rather how development economists embroiled themselves in challenging development issues of the post-colonial states. Awakening with the emergence of the new nations, the subject matter of development economics as Meier (1991) rightly points out "became at once both analytical and policy oriented" (p. 4). As Governments became more involved in the making of policy choices, the instrumental character of the state became more pronounced in size and effect. State activism and expansionism grew in tandem with the policy advice given by the so-called development specialists.

(a) Botswana at Independence in 1966

Perhaps no other newly independent African nation state needed development expertise in the form of technology and managerial input more than Botswana. At the time it achieved independence the country bore more marks of an economic welfare case: a situation which may particularly have appealed to those economists schooled in the welfare economics of the 1950s, with its emphasis on the correction of market failure. The country had a most rudimentary economic resource base and it was heavily dependent on the British Exchequer to cover a major portion of its annual capital and recurrent outlays. The projections in 1966 were that Botswana



would have to depend on the British Treasury for many years after independence (Stedman, 1993).

The country was deeply dependent upon the export of labour and imports of both foodstuff and manufactures from neighbouring South Africa. Independence also coincided with an unprecedented trauma: between 1961 and 1965 the most severe drought in living memory decimated an estimated one-third of the national herd at a time when the cattle industry accounted for 85 percent of export earnings (RoB, 1966). A fifth of the population were also reduced to destitution. Consequently, the prospects for rapid economic recovery and growth were deemed to be negligible. The tax base was almost non-existent as per capita income was just about US\$80. There were, thus, no possibilities for creating internal sources of Government revenue to boost domestic investment capital. But the British, eager to disburden themselves from the cumbersome responsibility of maintaining continual budgetary subventions to a costly dependent, were interested in re-establishing Botswana's productive capacity as rapidly as possible (Worby, 1988).

On the eve of independence, London despatched a powerful delegation to assess the economic profile of Botswana and the implications for future development. The British survey mission report of 1965 recommended heavy investment in agricultural development, primarily in the livestock sector (RoB, 1966). Ironically, the resurgence of the country's economic well-being, as later developments dictated, was not to come from either the livestock sector or British benevolence but as a godsend in the form of massive mineral discoveries and their exploitation in the late 1960s. It is no exaggeration to assert that livestock and crop production were not primary concerns of the BDP Government in the five years preceding 1970. This is in spite of the fact that some 90 percent of the population resident in rural areas were dependent on these sectors of the economy; with migratory wage income acting as a supplementary source. The mining industry, especially diamond mining, contributed to economic development in this period more than any other sector of the national economy (Worby, 1988).

However, Botswana's torrid rate of growth was generated at the expense of the rural economy. The rationale behind this parsimonious attitude to the rural sector may be puzzling to some observers, but it is directly related to the evolution of a pervasive policy that advocated massive domestic investment in the mining and urban sectors in order to achieve rapid and large returns which would in turn be reinvested in other sectors of the economy (RoB, 1972a). The argument, recurrent in policy documents of economic planners and reiterated by politicians of the ruling BDP and Government bureaucrats *ad infinitum* was that this policy orientation would promote linkages capable of spreading the benefits of the mineral boom to those sections of the population which did not have direct access to the mining industry. This policy orientation was

actually in tune with the academic wisdom of the day, and it derived intellectual legitimacy and nurture from the claims of development economics. But as we know today, a dramatic increase in national income did occur and yet no substantial investments were redirected to the productive spheres of the rural economy (2). The question is why?

3.5 The Tribal Grazing Land Policy (TGLP): Reform as Policy and Process

In spite of the debilitating impact of the 1961-1965 drought and famine, cattle replenished far more quickly than was expected and livestock production still accounted for an estimated 40 percent of the Gross National Product (GNP) in the late 1960s, although its relative share in total economic output fell in subsequent years. The size of the national herd dramatically increased in absolute terms to over three million head in the decade following the 1965 drought (3). It was this unexpected increase in the size of the national herd that attracted the attention of modernists within the techno-bureaucratic ruling coalition of the Democratic Party. Although most commentators have suggested that the evolution of a "radical" land use policy in the country (the TGLP) had its genesis in the statement in the 1970-1975 National Development Plan (NDP) which claimed that "overstocking and poor veld management is leading to wholesale destruction of grazing areas" (RoB, 1970, p. 15), we will in this chapter avoid such a simplistic approach. The necessity to adopt a new and more comprehensive historiographical perspective arises from the assumption that policy interventions are an expression of concrete contemporary class relations and cannot therefore be analyzed without reference "to the historical constitution of the modern social formation" (Worby, 1988, p. 157). We need to answer the following challenging questions:

- (i) Why did the TGLP emerge when it did, and in the form that it did? What classes are liable to gain from it, and what are the historical contingencies that enable the post-colonial state to be used for their benefit?

and the much quoted but never adequately answered question:

- (ii) "Why should reasonable men adopt public policies that have harmful consequences for the society they govern?" (Bates, 1981, p. 3).

The TGLP, when it came into being, was actually the continuation and not the beginning of a land policy. The colonial development ideology with respect to livestock accumulation and water development discussed in the previous chapter was a prelude to this policy. The quasi-legal forms of particularised/individual land tenure inherited from the colonial administration did not satisfy those educated and salaried politicians and Government bureaucrats who craved for

unrestricted but secure accumulation of cattle. Their first successful onslaught against this system found expression in the Tribal Land Act (cap. 32, sec. 02) which was enacted in 1968 and received Presidential assent in the same year. Although not brought into operation until the Minister of Local Government and Land issued a commencement order on 30 January, 1970 (Frimpong, 1986); the Act was seen in many quarters as a long overdue reformation of the tribal system of land administration.

Introducing a bill for the enactment of the Act in the National Assembly in 1968, the first President of the Republic of Botswana, Sir Seretse Khama, passionately argued that the existing customary mode of tribal land administration could not readily accommodate "modern concepts and practices in land use" (4). The Act, which has undergone no less than thirteen amendments since its enactment, falls under seven parts. Its focus is primarily on the institutions of control and management of land use. Under the provisions of the act Land Boards took over the chiefs previously monopolised powers of land allocation and administrative aspects relating to environmental management. There were, however, some serious understated concerns underlying the proposed reforms of the tribal system of land tenure. First, there was a perception that the existing system could no longer assure all Batswana of access to land. Second, but never publicly stated, there was a growing resentment among the new political leadership of the monopoly held by chiefs, some of whom were already at loggerheads with the BDP Government over the dispensation of political power as illustrated in the previous chapter. As Ngongola (1992a) rightly observes, politicians in Botswana, just like their counterparts elsewhere on the continent, could hardly have failed to appreciate the truism that "he who controls the land is in a good position to influence Government" (p. 149). It was thus argued that the system could be better "improved" by an element of "democratisation". We now know, of course, that TGLP turned out to be extremely undemocratic itself ; but as one Government bureaucrat told the academic-cum-activist, Wily (1981) "democracy has its own limits". These issues will be discussed later in this chapter.

It is now crucial to turn to an issue that is glaringly absent in the literature on land reform in Botswana: the issue of the political economy of post-colonial constitutional land reforms in Botswana. There are two extremes that can be noted, in relation to post-colonial land expropriation laws, in southern and central Africa. There is at the one extreme countries like Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, and now possibly South Africa, which have closely associated post-independence land reform and rights with the process of patrialisation, and Botswana on the other hand which has upheld colonially imposed constitutional safeguards against property expropriation for almost thirty years.

The only notable reform of property clauses was effected by Parliament in 1969 to clarify that property could also be acquired by the Government if the latter deemed it necessary or expedient to develop or utilise the mineral resources of the country by so doing. Save for this, any other form of land allocation or transfer by the state to landless peasants has since been carried out through a pervasive and ineffectual system of delegation characterised by the so-called Presidential Commissions.

For instance, the *Presidential Commission on Land Tenure in Botswana*, which was set up on 11, May 1983, and submitted its report on the 19th of December, 1983, aroused intense public criticism, as the BDP Government tried to use all of the powers at its disposal to block the release of the Commission's controversial findings. But, thanks to the impending and highly contested 1984 national general election, the belated partial release of the report resulted in a reduction of State Land from 47% to 23%, as 24% of the land previously so designated was transferred to peasant communities (Machacha, 1986). The Tribal Land (Amendment) Act, No.16 of 1985 authorised these transactions.

But this patrialisation exercise was, even more controversially, only confined to certain portions of the Central and Chobe districts. The North East, Southern and Kalahari districts, where vested economic interests, based on livestock production, date back to the colonial period, remained completely unaffected. The habit of stalling land reforms in those areas occupied by the economically disenfranchised minority ethnic groups remains largely unchallenged in Botswana. This is despite disturbing recent anthropological findings to the effect that the ethnic identities constructed and imposed by politically dominant tribes upon the minority ethnic groups in the nineteenth century, have become a potent source of pride and a political tool in contemporary Botswana (Solway, 1994b). In other words, the same stigmatised identities that were ascribed to these people, and thus employed to exclude them from participating in valued economic activities and from holding political office, have now been adopted for self-identification. Many literate members of these stigmatised groups use this new identity to challenge and undermine their dominant neighbour's claims to political hegemony (See Chapter 6 of this thesis for a detailed analysis of peasant response to Government policy in the post-independence period).

The vulnerability of the state in Botswana, due to issues relating to land tenure and public management, became apparent recently when yet another presidentially constituted commission of inquiry into land problems produced unexpected disasters. Instituted in July, 1991, to investigate, among other issues, "the frequency of change of use, the frequency of land transfers, and whether these were authorised by the land boards" and to "review the extent of illegal and other authorised allocations"; the Kgabo Land Commission, as it subsequently

became popularly known, led to unprecedented political upheavals in the country. Among the most dramatic political consequences of the Kgabo Report were the resignations of the Vice-President, who had previously been instrumental in pushing reforms of the system of tribal land administration, and the Minister of Agriculture, who was implicated by the report in some unauthorised land dealing (RoB, 1992a).

The Kgabo Land Commission Report also implicated people in senior Government structures, liberal professions, commerce and industry. Moreover, it controversially suggested that some illegal land acquirers and speculators were not uninfluenced by the prevalent perception that some Batswana in high political positions conspicuously indulged in illegal land dealings (*ibid.*). The findings of these two Commissions, however varied in form and content, indicate that land reforms in post-colonial Botswana have not escaped some of the problems commonly associated with land transformation efforts elsewhere in Africa (Haugerud, 1983 and Werbner, 1982).

The observations pointed out above bring us to the fundamental question of what land reform is all about and what the whole process should entail. The intention here is not to indulge our interest in the political economy of land reform *per se*, but rather to establish whether the various tenurial changes wrought by TGLP can justifiably be regarded as constituting land reform of a general or particular kind. This distinction is important given the current emphasis on "Botswana specialism" in Third World development literature (Charlton, 1991).

(a) Land Reform: a Process or Development Narrative?

It is difficult, and some social scientists would say almost impossible, to conceive of any universally acceptable or standard definition of land reform. But as Lipton (1993) suggests, certain features are definitely characteristic of land reform. These include:

compulsory take-over of land, usually... by the state,... from the biggest landowners..., with partial compensation... the farming of that land in such a way as to spread the benefits of the man-land relationship more widely.... Its [i.e. land reform] primary motivation is to reduce poverty by reducing inequality (via) distributist or collectivist means (p. 643).

We can infer from this broad definition that landed rights, land expropriation, compensation, conservation and reduction of poverty through land redistribution are crucial elements in land reform. Lipton further suggested that land reform must be "power-compatible" i.e. some combination of compensation, and a threat potential against losers dissatisfied with such compensation as may be awarded by the powers that be, must take place simultaneously with the land reform process. In a more recent article, Lipton, no doubt yielding to the diversity of

experience depicted in the history of LDCs in the last few decades, observes that titling or privatisation of communal land can only be classified as reform if it is invoked at the option of small peasant farmers, seeking rights against powerful chiefs (*ibid.*, p. 644).

But as we shall see, the so-called land reforms in independent Botswana did not conform to this understanding. To begin with, landlordism did not exist in pre-independence Botswana. Unlike in medieval England (Anderson, 1979 and Bloch, 1962), the tenure of land in pre-colonial Tswana society was not based on codified constitutional safeguards like Roman law, for instance. Political superiors, like chiefs, did not "own" the land in the same way as a feudal lord in Western Europe. So the circumstances underlying the introduction of land reform, and the assumptions pertaining thereto, must be analyzed and understood within the specific context of Botswana. The constitutional safeguards against expropriation of land, especially tribal land, from the indigenous people were at best implicit and at worst unenforceable. As mentioned before, land could and still can be expropriated by the state if such a move is deemed to be in the "public interest". In the particular context of Botswana, it is also clear that the threat of any "powerful" chiefs dispossessing small land users was virtually taken care of by the Tribal Land Act of 1968. This in effect leaves conservation (or better put environmental management) and alleviation of poverty as possibly the most pressing issues that could have precipitated land reforms in the country. This realisation was not lost on the proponents of land reform in Botswana in the immediate post-independence period. Their major problem seems, in retrospect, to have been that the Batswana were not convinced that there was any need to institute such reforms, a concern that is clearly manifest in Government planning policy documents such as the argument that:

... it is vital that the public be informed of the need for change and the reasoning behind Government's proposals.... It is most important that the dangers of misunderstanding be recognised and avoided (RoB, 1975a, p. iii).

Looking back today it is simply amazing to see how the state in Botswana managed to exploit the misguided intellectual enthusiasm of its expatriate-dominated academic community. Confronted with a need to formulate TGLP in a popular ideological idiom palatable to peasants, the Government convened an international Conference on *Sustained Production from Semi-Arid Areas*, held in Gaborone (the new capital) in 1971. The proceedings of the latter conference were conveniently published in the then only local journal of international renown and one which enjoyed readership widely among the national intelligentsia (Botswana Society, 1971a). The unfortunate consequence of this conference is that by giving legitimacy to what was to all appearances an uncalled for state interventionism, it also unwittingly illustrated what happens when development economics, and indeed any other short-sighted intellectual gerrymandering, merges with particular class interests serving to justify political action through the agency of the state.

(b) Sustainable Livestock Production Conference and Blueprint Development

The significance of the 1971 conference on sustainable livestock production in the more arid and less populated western parts of Botswana is underlined by the critical attention that it has provoked in the national historiographical landscape. Sponsored by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, it has been variously described as "the spark that set off the search for a new policy" (Picard, 1980, p. 325) of land use. It is also argued that the conference was somewhat unusual in that all but one of the active participants were expatriates (*ibid.*). Other commentators have been more blunt by asserting that "TGLP was conceived in an expatriate written report" (Molomo, 1989b, p. 240). While to Worby (1988) the conference provided "both an incentive and a leitmotif for such a policy" (p. 265).

To the extent that these statements suggest that the conference played an important role in the formulation of a land use policy, they are partly true. But it is clearly absurd to suggest that "expatriates created the TGLP" (Molutsi, 1989, p. 112). What this study will do, which has never been done before, is to start by analyzing the assumptions underlying the convention of the conference and the deliberations at the conference. Thereafter we will proceed to assess its outcome with a view to establishing whether TGLP was conceived as a land/livestock development" policy" or if it started as and remained merely "blueprint development" (5). In so doing we will rely on a critical appraisal of the sources available using Merton's doctrine of Insider and Outsider epistemology (Merton, 1972).

Finally, and more important, we will attempt to provide evidence on the nature and extent of TGLP's impact on rural differentiation and poverty. Our conclusion should illustrate that where a state is infantile and bent on reproducing itself, it is politics, and not market forces, that determine class configurations in society. In such an environment both economic class and personal interest become reliable predictors of personal motivation and bureaucratic behaviour.

The varied ideological arguments that promote and sanction state interventionism in the rural economies of most LDCs are, according to a stimulating recent publication (Roe, 1991), often dismissed as myths, fads or conventional wisdom. Roe implicitly tries to illustrate how these myths, ideologies, conventional wisdom or fads can be improved or superseded but his analysis is undermined by failure to provide a comprehensive case study concerning the impact of these "development narratives" on policy making in the LDCs. Botswana's experience clearly provides a specific case where a popular development narrative was used by a politico-economic class with vested interests to justify political action through the agency of the state. In fact TGLP is a story of how political development and class interests interact where production relations are at

best uncertain. To examine the relevance of the issues raised here we return to the themes and perspectives that dominated the Gaborone Conference.

The task of delineating and categorising "themes and perspectives" arising from any conference is very difficult to say the least. But there being a beginning to everything, bold efforts must be made sometimes and it is our duty to do so now. A closer reading of the conference proceedings, especially the unpublished versions, reveals that all the discussants at the conference were consciously or unwittingly influenced by contemporary social science: especially the doctrine of public management in environmental science. One scientist has somewhat awkwardly defined public management as:

... the perception, misperception and non-perception of environmental problems, translation of perceptions into policy, and either the allocation of these tasks to existing agencies or the establishment of new agencies to carry out the tasks: and finally, the actual implementation of the policy (Katoboro, 1980, p. 2).

In Botswana, the state used its bureaucratic machinery to carry out all these functions. In the academic sphere there are at least two assumptions which, and these are evident from the papers presented, eventually made it possible for the Government to meddle in environmental debates. At the one extreme there were those who argued that the country's environmental problems reflected nature. To them Botswana had to understand that environmental problems were constraints to development and consciously utilise the environment within the given limit (Pike, 1971). At the other extreme were those who contended that the country's problems were man-made and not necessarily climatological. They therefore advocated urgent protection of the environment so that it could sustain both man and beast. This argument which subsequently became the cornerstone of Government policy was strongly advocated by Child (1971) and Campbell and Child (1971). Finally, it should be recognised that the above positions are extremes along a continuum of which other participants took intermediate positions.

The first group was poorly represented at the conference but the endurance of their toil is reflected in the current popularity of their propositions among a large section of the academic community and the victims of TGLP (Wily, 1979a, 1979b, 1980 and 1981). For the second group the moment of the hour was captured by Child when he argued that reconciliation of socio-economic, political, and ecological problems was axiomatic for any sound rural development based on a country's renewable natural resources. The paper further called for development which was not only "economically sound" and "sociologically acceptable" but also "ecologically viable in the long term" (Child (1971, p. 157). Child argued that any rural development project conceived and implemented without taking these factors into consideration would, given the precariousness of Botswana's ecosystem, founder for ecological reasons "resulting in the unnecessary and rapid deterioration of the resource upon which the scheme was based" (*ibid.*,

p.157). Making a direct reference to the alleged impact of "unregulated" grazing practices on the veld, Child issued an alarmist warning, more typical of an evangelising prophet of doom than a scientist:

The process [i.e. presumably overgrazing] has taken place and is taking place in countries throughout the world. Botswana is no exception and unless the trend can be reversed, however unpalatable the process may be, it will lead to eventual national suicide and away from the goal of self-sufficiency (*ibid.*, p. 157).

It was noted that the exigencies of the cattle economy made it imperative that the "main ecological constraints on rural development" lay in resolving the problems of raising production and profitability from the livestock sector. This, of course, would have to be done to avoid "further destruction of the sensitive environment" (*ibid.*, p. 159). Lest his opponents were still in doubt as to the substance of his highly polemical peroration Child finished his case for the creation of an ecological balance between nature, on the one hand, and man and beast, on the other, by uttering a statement so supportive of Government development ideology that it has remained a catchphrase for politicians wishing to use the agency of the state for any purpose to the present day. According to Child:

The main causes of veld deterioration in large areas are associated with the mismanagement of cattle and other domestic stock.... Overgrazing and trampling by domestic animals destroys the perennial grasses on which ecological stability depends (p. 163).

Finally, as if to convince himself of the importance of what he was saying, Child volunteered advice to the Government on how it could arrest the alleged environmental deterioration. This required "a vigorous programme of (a) investigation, (b) education, and (c) application" (*ibid.*, p. 163). It was argued, rather unconvincingly (see previous Chapter of this thesis), that since most contemporary forms of land use in the Botswana of the immediate post-independence period had been borrowed from other countries with different ecological conditions (or were a residue of the past when human populations were smaller and less ambitious!) investigation was necessary to determine tenurial forms that were suitable to Botswana environmental conditions.

A massive educational programme directed at all levels of the society was needed "... to prepare people involved for changes in the customary forms of agriculture and to convince them of the need for these changes" (*ibid.*, p. 164, the emphasis is mine). Lastly, the gradual application of reforms would require, "administrative discipline to ensure that personal gain is not allowed to overshadow the long term national interest..." (*ibid.*, p. 164, emphasis is mine). Butler (1971), the then Chief Animal Production Officer in the Ministry of Agriculture, seemed to concur with this argument by pointing out that stocking rates in Botswana were too unregulated and adding that

".... This critical problem has *to be solved by the politicians and sociologists who have to change the attitudes of the people and introduce legislation to prevent overstocking* (p. 170, again the emphasis is mine).

The Child thesis is fundamentally flawed, not least because of its typical ahistoricism and simplicity, but mainly because of its presumptuous treatment of the question of causality. Certainly for a country which encompasses such a remarkable variety of topological and climatic conditions of soil types and vegetation but still highly susceptible to recurrent drought and erratic regimes of rainfall, it is most unscholarly to attribute environmental degradation to livestock production only (6). While Child was undoubtedly right to preach environmental awareness to the new Government, there is disturbingly no evidence either in his thesis or in the contemporary prevailing conditions in the country to warrant the introduction of a Government grazing policy. The charges of overstocking and overgrazing leading to rangeland deterioration in the 1960s are clearly exaggerated given the appallingly destructive impact of the 1960-1965 drought and famine on both the national herd and the natural environment as discussed earlier on in this Chapter.

It is also strange that by 1970 Child was still presenting the livestock sector as the economic boat of the nation when the latter actually accounted for no more than 40 percent of Gross National Product (GNP) and its relative share in total economic output was rapidly falling as the Government was redirecting almost all national investment to the more profitable and urban-based mining sector. As for the argument that land reforms were necessary because Botswana had inherited unsuitable tenurial forms of land use, Child seems to have completely misrepresented the facts. Unlike other British possessions in southern Africa, Botswana had firm forms of land tenure based on customary law and norms at independence. The only "received" tenurial forms were found in the Crown Lands (which became State lands after independence) and not in the Tribal Lands where an estimated 95 percent of the peasantry subsisted in agriculture. However, there were some quasi-legal occupations of land in the latter category which closely resembled foreign forms of tenure due to water developments wrought by British borehole technology as illustrated in the previous chapter. Even then, these quasi-legal property rights were enjoyed by a very small fraction of royals and their councillors.

The Tribal Land Act of 1968 had sufficient constitutional safeguards to protect peasants from further losing their land franchise by drastically curtailing the powers of the chiefs with respect to land administration. As for the assertion that Tswana customary forms of land use belonged to an earlier historical period and were thus "a residue of the past when human populations were smaller and less ambitious" one can only counter this preposterous suggestion by pointing out that there is no study as yet on the historical evolution of the said tenurial forms to warrant this

conclusion. Besides, the 1971 census put the population of the country at an estimated half a million people (RoB, 1972a). Only Child can explain to us as to why the Tswana of 1970 were more "ambitious" than those of the past and what this ambition entailed.

Be that as it may, what strikes one about these debates is the emphasis put on *actors or agents* as opposed to the *people or peasants*. One may rightly want to know why the former must *convince* the latter about *the need for these changes* as advocated in the italicised statements above. Why is it *the duty of politicians and sociologists to change the attitudes of these people* with respect to land reforms? Who and what is the problem here? To answer these questions one needs to return to an old development narrative which at face value is taken by some economists as a matter of fact but still a story which if put to the manipulative wisdom of people bent on promoting a class project (as opposed to a national project) can have devastating effects. This story is none other than Hardin's (1968) "tragedy of the commons". The delegates at the Gaborone Human Environment Conference on 11-12th, June 1971, and not October 1971 as Picard (1980) says, played, presumably unwittingly, into the hands of a powerful techno-bureaucratic coalition which was bent on using the agency of the state to promote a class project under the cloak of public interest.

Some economists will be surprised to realise that besides its occasional practical value, often characterised by prolonged controversial academic debates, the most significant feature of Hardin's "tragedy of the commons" is oddly its status as narrative (7). Most development specialists will readily accept that rural development in many parts of the Third World is at best a very fractious and unpredictable phenomenon. Given the range of uncertainties that often attend the process of rural transformation in terms of both the approaches used and the outcome possibilities, development specialists, bureaucrats and politicians tend ingeniously to resort to telling stories that can be operationalised into standard approaches with widespread applications. The academic purpose of these stories (in actuality viewed by some academics as theories), which Roe (1991) calls "broad explanatory narratives" (p. 288), may, and often do succeed in simplifying the ambiguities involved and thus creating a national rallying point for what many people would consider a national project. But the outcomes are much more often than not more unpredictable than the whole process.

Hardin relates "the tragedy of the commons" to the reader in a stylistic manner imbued with all the classic properties of a literary genre. His most widely quoted exposition of the theme of tragedy in the freedom of the commons is to the student of literature nothing else but a complete story with an opening, body, and conclusion.

Beginning

The tragedy of the commons develops in this way. Picture a pasture open to all... the rational herdsman concludes that the only sensible course for him to pursue is to add another animal to his herd. And another...

Middle

But this is the conclusion reached by each and every rational herdsman sharing a commons...

End

Ruin is the destination towards which all men rush, each pursuing his own best interest in a society that believes in the freedom of the commons (Hardin, 1968, p. 1244)

Botswana is one country where Hardin's story was used as a development narrative, and even today it remains enshrined into the country's rangeland policy. As James Leach, the Chief Technical Advisor in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, headed by the Vice-President Quett Ketumile Masire (now Sir Ketumile Masire and President of the Republic of Botswana), and famously known as the architect of TGLP, made clear in an interview, TGLP has remained a central part of livestock development programmes. This is reflected within Government circles by its simply being regarded as part of the National Development Plan (8).

When TGLP was first introduced it was presented to the people as a national project aimed not only at improving profitability and productivity within the livestock sector but also designed, as it were, to "push the Kalahari desert back". In essence it was sold to the public as an environmentally friendly policy whose purpose was to deal with the vagaries of a free commons. Although, Hardin's story was not referred to at the 1971 conference, it was a direct influence on the conference, and indeed on later government thinking as available literature indicates (Roe, 1991). People were told that overgrazing resulting from open grazing practices had exposed the country to the throes of a rangeland tragedy of the commons. To be fair to Hardin it is pertinent to mention that his description of the mediaeval open field system and the accompanying argument for private property rights solutions to modern environmental problems was, in the context of Botswana, clearly misunderstood or simplified to the level of abuse or caricature. Hardin makes it clear that, "[It] must not be supposed that all commons are bad in all situations"

(*ibid.*, pp. 47-48). Hardin further adds that, "[the] commons, if it is justifiable at all, is justifiable only under conditions of low population density" (*ibid.*, p. 28).

Now Botswana has one of the lowest population densities in the world and there is no reason why this aspect of Hardin's development narrative should have been overlooked by the architects of TGLP. We will establish here that had this suggestion been taken into consideration it would have been realised that the commons in the context of Botswana were manageable. The strong symbolism of this narrative was used to play on the minds of a gullible peasantry in order to expedite the execution of a hidden politico-economic agenda. This is especially so given that historical sources have long invalidated much of Hardin's descriptive narrative by indicating that, contrary to popular beliefs, the use of land for cultivation and grazing in the mediaeval period was strictly controlled (Quiggin, 1993).

3.6 TGLP: Underlying Assumptions and Developmental Strategy

There is a tendency among writers on the political economy of agrarian reform and rural differentiation in Botswana simply to stress the state ideological aspects of policy formulation (e.g. it is common to find whole lists of the so-called national development objectives, national principles, national development strategies and policies etc). This approach is intellectually irresponsible not least because it relegates much needed analysis to the background but also because it reduces intellectual discourse to the level of morality stories of the failure/success, good/bad, and strong/weak types. In the analysis of agrarian policies in Botswana and their influence on social differentiation and poverty we must steadfastly avoid such a simplistic approach. We must necessarily resort to a much more sophisticated and informative approach where class orientations of various social groups are considered and, furthermore, the ideology and economic behaviour of all economic and political actors be attributed to both personal psychology and structural dependence within the post-independence political economy and the new state itself. It is this belief that actually explains the highly multidisciplinary approach so evident in this thesis.

Development strategy is one of the most misunderstood concepts. For the purposes of our analysis here we understand development strategy to mean a set of internally consistent plans deduced from a general or several part-theories given certain goals (see Hesselberg, 1985). Ideologically, livestock policy in post-independence Botswana may, if one accepts the political rhetoric of the time, have been geared towards an increase and improvement in livestock production accompanied by a preservation of the pasture. But unfortunately there is little evidence to show this, and the really sad thing is the realisation that livestock policy remained instead subsumed under the overall general development policy of the country which has given

priority to growth targets, in both livestock and mineral production, and attaches second place to goals of redistribution and social justice.

In other words in Botswana, just as elsewhere in much of Africa (Sahn and Sarris, 1994), interventionism in the rural economy was a reflection of the state's power to create transfers and rents that could be utilised by the regime to build a political base. This explains why more interventionist measures coincided with the first general elections after independence.

The rationale behind the introduction of TGLP was simple. The Government, not the people, was to identify "empty" land (initially in the western part of the country), zone it, and translate it into commercial, privatised, cattle ranches. Within this very approach one can easily see some startling, if not only absurd, assumptions. According to Government plans, commercial ranching areas were to be located primarily in the Kalahari sandveld (i.e. the western part of the country) which was largely thought to be open grasslands and uninhabited except for a few cattleposts which had mushroomed in the face of national widespread intensification of British borehole technology application during the final days of colonial rule. Communal areas would substantially coincide with the eastern hardveld area of the country where most rural Batswana and much of their livestock were located. Ironically, it was widely known and historically well-documented that most of the land earmarked for this mammoth land scheme traditionally belonged to the semi-nomadic hunter-gatherer ethnic communities of khoisan descent (Wily, 1979a). The fact that the BDP leadership of the day chose deliberately to mislead its army of western trained technical survey personnel underlines the class orientation nature of TGLP. In pursuit of vested economic interests, portfolio ministers, backbenchers, bureaucrats and party functionaries conspired to abdicate their duties and responsibilities pertaining to social justice and deliberately sponsored a vicious class project whose repercussions are still evident to date (Hitchcock, 1982). For as one contemporary observer put it:

In effect TGLP now provides a modern example of a land grab along the same lines as alienation of the Kenya Highlands by the British, the enclosure movement in England, and the privatisation of land in the Ghanzi District (Katoboro, 1980, p. 12).

The comparisons drawn may sound harsh and exaggerated, especially when one bears in mind that they are made with reference to one of the few countries in the Third World which still claims to have an unblemished record in human rights abuse, but the tragedy is that the resemblance between the observed historical experiences and TGLP is strikingly similar.

The 1975 Government White Paper recommended that tribal grazing areas be zoned into three distinctive categories.

- (i) Land suitable for *commercial* purposes, basically cattle ranching, that would be *leased* to Botswana and developed on an *exclusive* basis, either *individually* or in *syndicates*.
- (ii) Land which would remain *communal* in nature, save for the introduction of stock limitations.
- (iii) Land set aside as *reserve areas*, which would be available for *future generations*, or for non-ranching purposes, such as *mining*, *wildlife*, and *arable agriculture*.

A number of words above are italicised and this calls for some explanation. Italicised words in categories (i) and (ii) are highlighted to underline our perception that post-colonial reforms of the tribal land tenure system in Botswana were influenced by existing accounts and interpretations of that very system which in essence were residual from the colonial past. At a practical level these changes were a reflection of the fact that the development of a landed aristocracy, which had been occurring with its own momentum against communalist forms of land tenure throughout the last three decades of colonial domination, was just about to be accelerated by the formal institution of legal recognition. Italics in the last category bear what we consider to be serious socio-economic and political dimensions whose repercussions almost brought civil strife to the country between 1989 and 1993 (RoB, 1992a). All these will be covered in a separate Chapter later on. It might, however, be noteworthy to draw the reader's attention to the cynical paradox inherent in the state's consideration of posterity while embarking on an enclosure movement (see category iii above).

At its conception, it would appear that the architects of TGLP wanted it to be approached in a phased manner. The initial step was to involve the zoning of the land base taking into consideration factors like water points, soil types, vegetation and range survey. The second phase, to coincide with the first, aimed at initiating a large scale consultation campaign to inform the public about the new policy (primarily through a massive radio campaign). The final phase, which anticipated a success of the former, was to be characterised by the demarcation, allocation and leasing of land to various proprietors. The TGLP was thus an extremely ambitious scheme right from the beginning. It must have been clear to its initiators that the selling of this policy package to the public and the subsequent implementation exercise, and even the possible rejection of the policy by those who could not perceive any benefits from its implementation (and they were many), would be costly. The TGLP was the first major national policy to be undertaken by the BDP leadership, and it is unlikely that the Government would have preferred anything but the success of the policy. This was important because it was introduced at a time when the Government was trying to consolidate both its political legitimacy and also demonstrate the credibility of its economic programme.

In the 1970s some social scientists were already pointing out the dilemmas confronting the post-independence state in Botswana with regard to the widely perceived need to give substance to the concept of independence in a sub-regional context geographically, economically, and politically integrated into a sub-system dominated by the racist South African regime (Osborne, 1986). One academic struck the cord when he advocated that national debates about the "content of independence" be less concentrated on political and economic relations with other countries to the exclusion of what independence could mean in terms of a more internal directed perspective. Osborne (1986) argued that:

... since the majority of Botswana's people are located in the rural areas... independence has also to be measured with regard to what it has meant, or could mean to, this body of people as individuals and communities. In short, the real meaning of independence lies in the possibility of an effective programme of rural development (p. 1)

Such strong arguments probably had some impact on the contemporary political leadership of Botswana but they failed to underscore the strength of prevailing features in terms of vested interests or classes within the political system which were incompatible with, and would, with the passage of time, seriously distort the future path of rural development.

The policies designed to affect the rural economy have, far from working towards the stated goal of equality as advocated by the social science of the 1970s and repeated *ad nauseam* in contemporary party political rhetoric, operated in exactly the opposite direction. Whilst some of the policies adopted are to blame for this, the most serious contradictions arose from the fact that the group benefiting economically from the same policies was to a considerable degree coterminous with that which was receiving greater political power and influence: Kuper's (1970) so-called "New Men" whose dominance in the rural economy is reflected in the preponderance of political forces represented by the BDP.

3.7 The Politics of Consultation

The introduction of the TGLP in Botswana in the 1970s was described by enthusiastic experts as

... probably the most open and comprehensive land reform programme being undertaken anywhere in the world at this time (Hitchcock, 1988, p. 93).

The story of the TGLP is itself closely associated with the history of James Leach's last days in Africa. Leach is well-known for his famous land reform efforts in post-colonial Africa. Despite his earlier career in Nigeria where he claims to have learnt the essence of "democratic consultation" while working among the Igbo people, Leach is still remembered by many political economists

and rural development specialists working in Africa for his contributions to the Kenyan Special Rural Development Programme (SRDP) as its Chief Advisor before his acrimonious departure to embark on the even more ambitious TGLP in Botswana (9). Leach's involvement in Botswana was not confined to the TGLP but he was also involved in other large scale development thrusts in the six years or so that he spent in the country. But, in addition to this massive self-application to the course of African rural development efforts Leach will also be remembered by generations not only for his practical achievements but also the steadfastness with which he has taken it upon himself to defend his record against critics from his retirement home in Norfolk (Leach, 1981). As Roe notes there are few accounts by expatriate advisors of their role in Government decision making in spite of a growing literature critical of their involvement (Roe, 1993). By engaging with his critics, Leach, despite the obvious short-comings (10), provides us with an "insider's account", of the hitherto untold 'happenings' behind the corridors of power; especially with regard to issues of public service management and rural development policy.

The responsibility for drafting the TGLP was coordinated by the Rural Development Unit (RDU) of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP), whose head and Chief Advisor was Leach, with close cooperation with planning officers in the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and the Ministry of Local Government and Lands (MLGL). This inter-ministerial alignment may have been a result of the importance attached to the TGLP and the exigencies of skilled manpower and technology crucial to a country whose institutional development was at a most infantile phase but in a political sense it simply reflected the strong attachment that Botswana's so-called modern political leadership still carried over from the antiquated pre-colonial and colonial past: the traditional Tswana concept of citizenship.

In modern society, the agency view of the state continues to enjoy deep articulation; particularly in recent contractual theories of justice. The idea of citizenship, with its constituent spheres, viz; the civil, the political and the socio-economic, is central to any discussion of human welfare. Briefly, the civil element of citizenship consists of the rights essential for the basic liberties: especially the fundamental right to justice. In a democratic society it finds legal expression in the organic structure called civil society. The political element consists of the right of a person to participate in the exercise of power, as a member of a body invested with political authority or as an elector of such a member and

... by the socio-economic element we mean a range that encompasses the right to a certain share of resources, [to] the right to share to the full in the social heritage, and live the life of a civilised being commensurate with the standards prevailing in the society in question (Dasputa, 1990, p. 1).

Historically, Botswana has had all these elements of citizenship embodied in the institution of the *Kgotla* (traditionally the omnipotent assembly of council to which all aspired for welfare and

deliverance; see previous chapter). The principle underlying both the social organisation and political function of the *Kgotla* was, and still is, *consultation*. The problem is that, although it has never been established what is actually meant by this kind of *consultation*, all Government officials and the majority of local academics, as evidenced by the lacklustre treatment of the matter by the Botswana Democracy Project writers (11), simply equate both the process and the practice of *Kgotla* meetings and the alleged attendant 'consultation' with *democracy*. The obvious result of course is that in Botswana, whenever the Government wants to undertake a large national project, it first embarks on a 'nationwide consultation exercise'.

The problem however with this conception of "democracy" is the failure by both its advocates and practitioners to appreciate the inadequacies of this system of governance in the traditional past. In all historical Tswana societies the chief rarely *consulted* his subjects on matters of national importance. He merely consulted his assorted body of immediate councillors and elders for political advice before acting in the 'public interest'. It was purely up to the idiosyncrasies of the chief, and the occasional need, that the advice of the chief's cabal would be supplemented (but never contradicted) by a communal gathering's deliberations: even then women were forbidden to attend and those held under various forms of subservience and vassalage denied the right to public speech (Thapelo, 1990).

The post-colonial state sought to preempt meaningful political dialogue about critical policies like the TGLP by using the idiom of a democratic past that never existed in order to prevent people from embracing modern contractual theories of justice. This was facilitated by the fact that, albeit protected by Parliament, Courts and Local Government, civil society in the country was weak and therefore its aspirations were highly susceptible to perversion by powerful groups which eventually gained control of the bureaucratic apparatus. The TGLP provides an excellent example of how this happened because, when the Government started its consultation exercise, it had already decided that the policy would be implemented regardless of any opposition from both within the state apparatus and without. What it only wanted was to give a semblance of "democratic participation" in the execution of the policy. But 'political participation' was used here not to mean (i) involvement in decision making (ii) by all social strata (iii) so that decisions taken do not favour only those groups that already have privileged access to resources and (iv) that the people also take an active part in implementing decisions arrived at rather than leaving this to an outside agency (this is not the kind of democratic ingredient that can ever be part of the BDP ideal of democracy).

The authority for the consultation on TGLP was drawn from Government White Paper No.2 of 1975 entitled *National Policy on Tribal Grazing Land* where on page 18 it is stated under the

heading 'Part viii: *PUBLIC CONSULTATION ABOUT THE NATIONAL POLICY ON TRIBAL GRAZING LAND*' that:

... before implementation (of the TGLP) begins the Government will mount a nation-wide public discussion of the programme and the issues involved. People at every level will be fully informed and consulted before the process of change is set in motion.... A multi media consultation programme based on this Government Paper, will be launched (RoB, 1976, p. 1).

The planning and organisation of the consultation exercise was carried out by the inter-ministerial Grazing Committee (GC), a working committee of the Rural Extension Coordinating Committee (RECC). The GC worked with the District Councils (DCs) to establish district and town consultation teams, and these teams in turn acted as a link between central Government and the rural sector by establishing village extension teams.

The consultation calendar was in no doubt a hurried affair considering the complexity of the issues involved. It was roughly characterised by four interconnected phases. First on the agenda was the "national speaking tour of kgotlas and public meetings by His Excellency the President of Botswana, Sir Seretse Khama, and his ministers which was scheduled for only one month (i.e. August-September 1975). The second phase involving briefings and seminars for Government officials, Unified Local Government Service Staff, Councillors, Land Boards, Conservation Committees and Tribal Authorities lasted from July 1975 to February of the following year. It almost coincided with the third phase which, beginning in December 1975 and closely associated with the Radio Learning Campaign (RLC), was concerned with radio learning group leader training courses, materials preparation, project information through radio broadcast programme strategy and "answer" programmes broadcast. It lasted until November 1976. Finally came 'the analysis of the consultation response'. The views of the campaign participants were recorded by each radio learning group leader on ten forms, sent in after each broadcast. Altogether, 25,000 such report forms were submitted, processed and sent to the Government Computer Bureau (GCB) for tabulation. Incidentally, processing and interpretations lasted from July until November 1976 which makes nonsense of Government claims that there were 'four' stages of consultation. The last two worked out with such simultaneity that for our analysis we will treat them as constituting one phase.

3.8 Consultation: Method, Evaluation and Results

The ten report forms constituted the main instrument of the consultation campaign. They contained a total of forty questions concerned with what was considered to be the main proposals of the policy (RoB, 1976). Thirty questions were given pre-coded responses to make easier allowance for computer analysis. The remaining ten questions were left open-ended and

a sample translated from vernacular and analyzed by hand. At the end of each report form was an extended invitation to each Radio Learning Group (RLG) to ask any questions. These were then sampled, translated and answered by an Answer Group (AG) which comprised four cabinet ministers. In five months an estimated eight hundred such questions were answered on the radio.

When the ten report forms arrived in Gaborone they were coded for the computer. This was done by twenty students from the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (now the University of Botswana) and 'casual labour' under the supervision of the Campaign Consultation Officer (CCO). The computer-processed results were available to the Government within two and a half months of the end of the consultation campaign. All aspects of the consultation were monitored by the evaluation unit of the Botswana Extension College. Continuous evaluation was deemed to be critical in the provision of more professional information on the collection and analysis of questions asked to cabinet ministers at tribal assemblies; knowledge of, and attitudes to, the TGLP by participants at the Tribal Lands Development Workshop of October 1975; the pilot consultation campaign of December 1975; the results of the pre-testing of some of the TGLP teaching materials; extension worker activity related to the TGLP; knowledge about the TGLP by a sample of RLG leaders and observations of the RLG campaign from twenty participant observers distributed throughout the country (RoB, 1976).

Below is a summary of the campaign results

Total number of the RLG leaders trained	3,510
Total number of the RLGs sending in one or more report forms	3,173 (90.4%)
Total number of RLGs sending in at least nine report forms	1,737 (49.5%)
Total number of report forms processed by computer	23,752
Total number of reports received	24,850
Average RLG size (provisional)	17 members
Total population reached through the RGLs (3 173 x 17)	54,000
Average attendance per member (approx)	6.5

Source: RoB (1976, p. 3).

3.9 TGLP: Was There Consultation?

According to the study guide used to sell TGLP to the public, consultation is "asking people what they think". The report referred to above adds the observation that RLGs appeared to accept this and that a majority agreed that consultation is 'Government and people discussing together what to do'. However, it adds that some RLGs were frankly suspicious and wanted to know why the Government was consulting them on the TGLP while it did not do the same with other development projects, and perhaps even more important could not answer the question, "what is consultation?" (ibid., p.7). On the surface it may appear academic to highlight people's apprehensions about the motives of the Government. But, given the abstract nature of the recently introduced modern infant state in the country with respect to ordinary people, anxieties must have been anticipated; especially due to the uncertain interaction between the rural poor and the post-colonial state in a situation like Botswana where these proposed radical changes were preceded by an unusual situation whereby the colonial state was so detached from the colonial subjects that its administrative capital was located in the Union of South Africa (see Chapter 2).

The failure or unwillingness of the Government to explain precisely to the people what it meant by consultation probably further compounded this situation but it should have been expected for two reasons. First, we believe that it is highly possible that had this matter been addressed seriously, the implementation of TGLP would not have materialised. Second, the concept of "consultation", as encapsulated in the development ideology of Botswana, is unique in that while it purports to act as a mechanism for soliciting mass participation in the drive for national economic development, it simultaneously functions as an effective exclusionary instrument. In other words suggestions by social science research that Botswana's system of consultation-oriented development is a function of participatory democracy is completely false as this thesis will clearly demonstrate (see Chapter 4).

Participatory democracy as we understand it in political science and political theory, and not as it is practised in Botswana, is a political system that allows a *large* number of people to take *active and direct participation* in Government or the *formulation of public policy* (Raymond, 1978). In the earlier studies of political participation, emphasis was laid on psephology (or the study of electoral behaviour). The emergence and rise of political sociology in the 1960s has, however, contributed tremendously to the study of both conventional politics and unconventional politics such as protests, revolutions, power, resource misuse etc. Theoretically, every citizen can participate and influence the political process but in reality there is, more often than not, an unequal degree of political participation and influence. Indeed as Alford (1985) has noted, participation without power is more characteristic of the poor and working classes while power

with or without participation is characteristic of the rich and upper classes. So any Government which seeks genuinely to incorporate its population in the political and development processes, including the Botswana Government, must take corrective measures to ensure that political participation includes all those activities by private citizens that seek to influence, or to support the Government and politics; including the actions contemplated or taken by the state. To the economist such activities should be those which empower people by inculcating what Booth and Seligson (1978) defined as 'behaviour influencing the distribution of public goods' (quoted in Kuper 1987, p. 183).

But the conception and practice of political participation in Botswana operated in exactly the opposite direction. By describing, and not defining, consultation as 'asking people what they think' and as 'Government and people discussing together what to do' the Government was deliberately creating a false picture of de-professionalisation in national planning to make people feel more responsible for their well-being. This invariably would make people less critical of public policy and more likely to blame themselves if things went wrong. The aim in my view therefore was simply to make people less responsive to political issues. This approach seems to have paid a good dividend to the BDP Government. As one recent study has shown:

... politicisation and raising the awareness of the majority of the population is an important counterweight which would limit the freedom of public servants and the politicians to serve their own interests. The rural poor in Botswana are not politicised; rather decisions are taken for them.... The rural poor are accustomed to this state of affairs and have not questioned it seriously (Noppen, 1982, p. 2).

The success of this depoliticisation has in the last three decades returned the same Government to office with monotonous regularity. So when people talk of the 'exceptionality' of Botswana's 'democratic system' they must understand that their emphasis on "Botswana's exceptionalism" is in essence on this negative side of "symbolic" participation.

3.10 TGLP: A Critical Interpretation of Consultation and Policy Process

There is a striking resemblance between what Markovitz (1977) termed the "organizational bourgeoisie" and the manpower composition of the organisational structure of the consultation team on TGLP. Markovitz points to "a combined ruling group consisting of the top political leaders and bureaucrats, the traditional rulers and their descendants, and the leading members of the liberal professions and the rising business bourgeoisie" (*ibid.*, p. 208) operating in collaboration in the post-colonial era in Africa to influence public policy. However, Markovitz chooses not to demonstrate *how* this "organizational bourgeoisie" operates *autonomously* to influence public policy *reflective* of its *own interests* (see Markovitz, 1970).

The organisational structure of the consultation team on TGLP can be divided into three categories, each representing entrenched vested interests; viz (i) Central Government, (ii) District level and (iii) Village level (somewhat misleadingly referred to as 'Field' level in Government planning documents). The BDP Government, incumbent since the granting of independence in 1966, is notorious for its delegation of unpopular responsibilities to its institutionally poorly organised and inexperienced civil service. The euphemisms used to cover up this shirking of political responsibilities usually range from the now famous but never formally or officially well-defined "public consultation" to the more technical so-called "pilot projects" and the even more vague politically inspired "national commissions of inquiry and recommendations to Government". In their own different ways, of course, all these extensions of what one may call "governance by delegation" do have their merits; for example creating the impression among the ill-informed majority of the population that the Government is in effect not monolithic with only one single opinion on any matter, but the latent intention is always the same: viz, shirking of responsibility by the state while selling extremely unpopular policies to the electorate. Such was the case with the introduction of TGLP and other subsequent agricultural policies.

Following the Radio Learning Campaign concerning the introduction of the TGLP nationwide, the Government issued a public memorandum in 1977 which purported to affirm the popularity of the policy. In retrospect, it is amazing to realise how civil servants and an extensive army of foreign development specialists were duped by the Government through the RLC. At this juncture it is pertinent to make a critical appraisal of the latter. The RLC was, as Sandford (1980) rightly points out, "a uniquely determined effort in the history of pastoral development programmes anywhere in the world... to explain to the general public what was intended" (p. 4). But what was critical about the RLC was not its proclaimed "universal uniqueness" or explaining what the BDP Government intended doing *per se*.

Analysis relating to the RLC and the possible impacts with respect to the introduction of TGLP must not emphasise the manifest intentions of the exercise at the expense of the latent ones. It would be puerile and even misleading for any analysis to assert that the decision to allow an extremely uneducated peasantry to express their opinion was taken easily (*ibid.*). As a matter of fact, a study conducted by the independent Institute of Development and Management (IDM) subsequently demonstrated that some Government decision-makers actually argued that the implementation of TGLP be based on technical and bureaucratic criteria and took great exception to the idea of popular participation which was not only deemed as complicating policy matters but also viewed as pandering to populist ideology (for more information see Odell, 1980). What was at stake about the introduction of TGLP was basically the dilemma that often confronts Governments that make a commitment to the doctrine of democratic consultation. At the centre

of this dilemma is the critical question of whether, having solicited the opinions of the public on an important policy issue, it is possible to ensure their acceptance in the corridors of power.

As soon as one starts grappling with the issue raised above a series of questions come to mind. Did the Government of Botswana really *intend* to take into account the express views of the mass of the peasantry when final decisions about the TGLP were made or did it simply go through the motions of consultation whilst surreptitiously retaining effective decision making within a small group of politicians and techno-bureaucrats?

3.11 The Consultation Controversy

The controversy surrounding the public consultation on TGLP stems from what functionalist sociologists would term the manifest and the latent intentions of an agency like the state. The former refers to what the agency concerned state as its objective(s) to its constituency and is therefore ideological while the latter is in essence a concealment of the real intentions of the agency (12). What did the BDP Government want to do and why? A study of official and semi-official public documents clearly indicates that the Government's conception and notion of consultation differed markedly from those of the public. For example, while *Lefatshe La Rona-Our Land*, the study guide document issued officially to all Radio Listening Groups (RLGs) and civil servants (surprisingly after the processing and interpretation of the consultation responses), maintains that "consultation is asking people what they think" a large majority of RLGs (63.8%) had previously contended that consultation is "Government and the people discussing together what to do" (RoB, 1977a, p. 17). This disagreement was never discussed again.

The apparent unwillingness and subsequent failure by the Government to provide a clear and unambiguous official definition of consultation in line with the theoretical underpinnings of the culture of democratic participation that the post-colonial state in Botswana has sought to cultivate is alarming given the scale and magnitude of the changes envisaged by the TGLP proposals. Asked what parts of the policy they wanted to learn more about a sampled group of 1,964 people simply pointed out the definition of consultation (67.4%) as opposed to 64.0% of the respondents who wanted to learn more about better land and cattle management and 55.5% who were intent on further enlightenment on the "ideas behind solutions to the present problems" (*ibid.*, p. 46).

It is, therefore, clear that while consultation was a mere intellectual exercise to the Government (i.e. rubber stamping on a concluded and sealed policy package), to the peasants it was seriously perceived as a practical undertaking based on mutuality of interests. At a more theoretical level these differences of interpretations reflected a scenario more complicated than mere schematics. A study of the questionnaires used by the Government and the oral

responses of the RLGs affirm the proposition that TGLP focused on land and cattle. The concept of conservation was adroitly abused to influence the outcome of the public consultation programme despite protestations to the contrary by the Government and its apologists. Assumptions drawn from the stated objectives of TGLP demonstrate that the TGLP proposals attempted to combine the commercialisation of the livestock industry with a programme to promote range management and scale down what was presented to the populace as a deteriorating environment (Odell, 1980).

Unfortunately, the public did not see things that way. Properly defined, environmental degradation should be understood to be taking place if an irreversible decline in the productivity of the environment in terms of products useful to man and other species in a given ecosystem is evident (Sandford, 1980). Mere changes in the vegetation, as was the case in Botswana, cannot be said to constitute environmental degradation. Unit 1 Question 2 of the consultation document clearly illustrates that the Government exploited cosmetic environmental changes to sell the TGLP to the peasants. The latter were asked the following convoluted question: "Have you ever seen any of the following in your area? - Dongas, Bush encroachment, Bare soil, Poor grass, Weeds." Any student of environmental science knows that the latter manifestations may indeed be symptomatic of range deterioration but that they in themselves do not necessarily constitute environmental degradation nor do they always presage the inevitability of the same phenomenon. The public seem to have been aware of this for while 41.2% reported seeing weeds in their areas, 40.0% (dongas), 37.4% (poor grass), 34.1% (bush encroachment), and 25.7% (bare soil) the overall national response was that only a third of the population (32.9%) felt there was a problem of overgrazing or range mismanagement (RoB, 1977a). Needless to say this was a devastating blow to the Government for it had sought to make TGLP look like a national crusade against desertification.

One of the critical assumptions behind the introduction of the TGLP was that overgrazing had occurred leading to sheet erosion, bush encroachment, and a general decline in productivity and that under the old communal system, which TGLP was to replace, no system of improved range management was possible. However, as the figures above indicate, the public did not agree with the Government's perspective on the issue of overgrazing. An independent study sponsored by the British based Overseas Development Institute (ODI) four years after the implementation of the TGLP actually shows that less than 50% of the RLGs in the TGLP consultation exercise, in spite of what it refers to as "considerable prodding", could be induced to say there was considerable overgrazing in the areas they knew (Sandford, 1980).

It is amazing therefore to note that the Botswana Government proceeded with the implementation of the TGLP on environmental grounds in spite of increasing evidence that there

was no need to do so. The environmental dogma was perpetuated by foreign experts, bureaucrats and politicians. The justification for this unprecedented display of arrogance of power by the post-colonial state was expressed by the Government of the day thus:

.... It is worth noting that the amount of overgrazing is viewed differently by Batswana from different parts of the country. Similarly conservation seems to have different meanings for English as opposed to primarily Setswana speakers (RoB, 1975a, p. 7).

The wisdom, if one could really call it that, behind this clumsy justification for the introduction of what contemporary observers thought was the most radical pastoral development project in the Third World was simply that the "experts" (development specialists, techno-bureaucrats and the political elite) inherently; and perhaps professionally, knew what was good for the public (the latter's opinions notwithstanding!). This irony was, of course, later pointed out by a disinterested observer who bluntly asked, "Why is it ... that those of us who are not natives of Botswana, but come for quiet short periods of time, are so convinced that degradation is taking place, while the Batswana [sic] themselves are not?" (Sandford, 1980, p. 11). The other irony which has never been observed and needs emphasis here is that although complaints about overstocking and concomitant overgrazing have been going on for several decades in Botswana (coupled with the belief that under-nutrition is a prime cause of low fertility and high mortality) we also believe that the cattle population of overstocked areas trends inexorably upwards! (*ibid.*). Such intellectual inconsistencies easily lend themselves to open abuse and manipulation by those who seek to promote their vested economic interests through the agency of the state, as was the case with the TGLP.

The so-called public consultation programme was merely a ruse to contain popular dissent by selling the anticipated land and pastoral reforms in popular ideological terms in order to convince the peasantry that the Government of the day was acting in their interests and therefore needed their cooperation. As Worby (1988) clearly argues in his in-depth analysis of the uneasy dialectical relationship between political power and poverty:

.... More than mere rhetoric, the way in which development problems and solutions are dressed up for public consumption reveals just how unpalatable a Government fears its policies might turn out to be, and gives an indication of where fundamental contradictions between state and peoples, and between social classes, ultimately lie (p. 155).

The reality of such fundamental contradictions between state and peoples, and social classes was, in the case of the TGLP consultation programme, no more poignant than in the arguments aroused by RLGs demands for guarantees from the Government regarding the benefits that would accrue to the small man from the TGLP. The Government, more interested in the immediate acceptance of its envisaged policy changes instead of unsolicited demands by the

peasantry, was completely unprepared to discuss "small man politics". Consequently, when the issue emerged as a main theme of the RLGs questions with most RLGs calling for state funded group ranching resembling the syndicate system that prevailed during the colonial period as a result of British borehole technology, the BDP Government could only embarrassingly respond by saying there was insufficient "understanding, consensus, and the necessary mechanisms" to justify group organisation (RoB, 1976). This unconvincing response would sound naive if it were not so hypocritical.

By the time TGLP was introduced, exclusive rights of land tenure were already well-established in the country and most politicians and bureaucrats were familiar enough with them and could thus have imparted the received knowledge to the peasants (13). Besides, the Government had also argued that the introduction of TGLP was overdue since "adequate technical information" was available to raise "many more cattle on the same amount of land" (RoB, 1976, para. 10211). The fact of the matter is that the Government was intent on pursuing a class project; and this was even made easier by its abstraction from the general public. The preliminary report on the consultation campaign concluded that:

... many Batswana have very little idea about what Government really is, what it does, what it can be expected to do and how it works. Government seems to be a remote, supremely powerful avuncular authority that can give or take away important possessions at will (*ibid.*, p. 13).

3.12 TGLP: Its Impact and Implications for Policy Analysis

Social science in Botswana has over the last couple of years concentrated attention on the evaluation of the success of the TGLP in terms of its initial objectives as enunciated in the Government White Paper (RoB, 1975a) which stated that the envisaged changes in the pasture and other tenorial innovations sought:

- (a) to make grazing control, better range management and increased productivity possible;
- (b) to safeguard the interests of those who own only a few cattle or none at all; and
- (c) to provide for the right of every tribesman to have as much land as he needs to sustain himself and his family (see para. 14 for the latter objective).

It should, however, be noted that the evolution of TGLP was neither incidental nor clearly planned as the available literature suggest. Emphasis on the so-called "stated objectives" is misleading for it wrongly implies that there was an ideal from which there was a marked departure. As Roe (1993) argues, an evaluation of rural development policies that evolve under

high uncertainty and take the "process approach" like the TGLP must focus on issues of public service and management. Are the policy makers motivated by personal interest or their general fit with the political environment within which they operate? Do the advisors who are highly influential in writing a policy have as much influence in its implementation? These questions are critical because what many academic commentators may view as "Government policy" may in fact look to the policy makers as much more contingent and unpredictable as mentioned at the opening of this chapter. This was particularly the case with TGLP for, as James Leach, its chief architect, made clear in an interview:

... it was always conceived, the whole TGLP was always conceived as an on going processes [sic] ... by we who formulated it as a process... not as a fixed policy which had been decided once and for all (Leach, 1987, Interview).

The immediate question then is why would someone who was instrumental in the introduction of a mammoth project like TGLP dismiss it as a mere "on-going process". In our view one of the possible explanation for this ambivalence comes from the increasing misunderstandings about expatriate advice in the Third World and the link between the public service and rural development in general. The common charge that foreign development specialists working in the Third World "subvert Government by bending policy to their own ends" and that foreign experts do not only advise Governments in the LDCs but "they inscrutably and unobtrusively make policies" may actually need to be viewed with scepticism in some contexts (Tandon, 1973).

Merton's theory of Insider and Outsider epistemology teaches us how an insider, like Leach in the case of the TGLP, can function as an outsider when it comes to analyzing the institutions and processes of which he was a part (14). In an interview Leach makes it clear that:

... the whole principle of the thing was to work out a policy which could be used realistically by Batswana given the actual political situation of the big cattleowners, what would work given Quett Masire's own interests, personally, and others of his fellows, what he could do politically... because that was the only way that any effective policy could be implemented (Leach, 1987, Interview).

Way back Leach (1981) put forward the argument that, whereas it was undeniable that expatriates working for the Government of Botswana had a substantial input in policy matters, local civil servants actually made all the critical decisions. This brings us to the issue of public service and management.

In a pioneering body of work, based on extensive field research and some random interviews, Louis Picard has managed to make a remarkable contribution to the debate on the political economy of agro-commercialisation in post-independence Botswana (see Picard, 1979a, 1979b, 1980, 1985 and 1987). The main argument advanced by Picard is that expatriates played a

dominant role in both the drafting of the TGLP proposals and in the ensuing resistance to it by those who worried that the policy would inevitably culminate in a "land grab" of unprecedented proportions. Eventually, TGLP was implemented even though Botswana's political elite was conscious of the sensitivity involved in making drastic land use changes. It is crucial to attempt an in-depth analysis of the apparent political apathy of Botswana's native bureaucratic cadre and the mass of the peasantry.

A study of the works written by Leach and the interviews that he has been more than willing to give in the recent past lend colour to the supposition that although senior civil servants were actively involved in the decisions affecting the TGLP project, the majority of middle and lower ranking public administrators succumbed to an attitude of resigned indifference. Even the more broadly researched and complicated analysis provided by Picard (1980) leads to the same conclusion.

The TGLP was not the first project designed to affect the rural economy even though some political economists researching in Botswana have sought to create that impression. During the 1973/74 financial year the BDP Government vigorously embarked on a "conscious" policy towards rural development. In the previous general elections, held in 1969, the performance of the ruling party had been less impressive owing to the increasing challenge put up by a left-centrist coalition of tribal chiefs and Marxist-Leninists represented by the BNF (see previous chapter) in the south of the country. The opposition was making serious inroads into the BDP dominated political plane by effectively exploiting its unpopular constitutional reforms and the policy vacuum over the rural economy where the vast majority of the electorate were domiciled. A noted critic and academic observed at the time that three trends were becoming more pronounced in the rural economy and that the same would continue to be of paramount importance in determining the character of rural transformation (Holm, 1972). Holm argued that: (i) the Government was giving low priority to rural resource allocations, both material and human, (ii) popular participation in the rural economy (mainly characterised by supplementary and piecemeal subsidised rural development projects and drought relief programmes) was being used as an instrument for bureaucratic domination of the village modernisation process, and (iii) an emergent agricultural and shopkeeping bourgeoisie was acquiring the mantle of local political leadership regardless of individual political affiliation. The latter class strata was being benefited and expanded by Government sponsored programmes of rural change primarily aimed at ameliorating the progressively declining economic condition of the poor peasantry.

It was against the background of this deteriorating situation that the BDP Government embarked on a rural development drive with a clear political motive to win over the rural electorate on the eve of the 1974 national general election. The Government countered

accusations of extravagant expenditure and flagrant promotion of political patronage networks by arguing that the development of the agricultural sector of the rural economy was important for reasons of self-sufficiency in food which was necessary to save foreign exchange. It also contended that the latter development would keep down urban wages and make better use of under-exploited land and labour (Shrestha, 1986).

The 1973-1978 National Development Plan (NDP 111), the third five-year national development plan since independence in 1966, launched a belated major rural development programme aimed at achieving *visible* rural development; the Accelerated Rural Development Programme (ARDP). However, the ARDP turned out not to be an effective rural development scheme at all. The ARDP was in essence an infrastructural project and its accent was on social services. It involved the construction of primary schools, health care centres, and gravel roads. It was jointly coordinated and implemented by the Ministry of Local Government and Lands whose allocated expenditure accounted for 53% of the total rural investment in that financial year, the Ministry of Works and Communications (25%), the Ministry of Mineral Resources and Water Affairs (19%) and the Ministry of Agriculture (2.3%). Overall the total rural investment by the Government cost an estimated P21.2 million compared to a total rural investment of only P8.8 million over the period 1960/67- 1972/73 (Noppen, 1982 and Shrestha, 1986).

It is widely acknowledged in the literature that the ARDP was a dismal failure. But we should note that the lessons learnt from this project were crucial in determining the character of changes in the rural economy and the future strength of Government institutional policy capabilities. It also evolved a paternalistic, as opposed to a participatory, approach to rural development. Many peasants started viewing Government as the provider even though only a few better-off farmers benefited from the externalities generated by the ARDP. Finally, both Government officials and the rural populace began to associate "development" with the "free" provision of physical infrastructure by the state. Involvement by the people affected, in line with the Government's ideological campaign for *ipelegeng* (self-reliance), was no longer a pre-requisite for development to take place. This had two consequences; First, it marked an important shift away from the public works tradition as practised by the tribal age-regiments during, and even prior to, the colonial era. Even the self-help efforts promoted by the post-colonial state in the 1960s to deal with the exigencies of drought, semi-famine conditions, and dependence on the British Treasury were strongly undermined and a "laissez-faire" attitude and a culture of dependence started slowly to replace self-reliance. Second, and more sinister, the state realised that it could rely on vote catcher projects like the ARDP to perpetuate its political power and authority. Consequently, the BDP Government has continually relied on ARDP-type programmes to sustain itself in power for the last thirty years.

There can be no doubt that Government's experience with the ARDP influenced the agenda for the introduction of the TGLP. But if the former served the interests of the state so well, as argued above, why did the Government suddenly and haphazardly introduce the latter even though it had widely won the 1974 elections and there was no need for it to have "spent its way out of political trouble"? The next general elections were only to be held in 1979 (Cohen and Young, 1979).

The TGLP is unique in that it is the only post-independence agricultural policy which was not introduced as a "quick fix" measure. Its introduction and subsequent transformations have rather been more consistent with the ever changing, and very uncertain, economic basis of class formation and configuration in Botswana's political economy. As argued earlier in this chapter, the origins of TGLP go back to the colonial period. But it was only in the post-independence period that conscious efforts were made by the ruling class to embark on an enclosure movement. The 1971 Gaborone international conference on sustainable livestock production and the Chambers-Feldman (1973) report on rural development gave unprecedented legitimacy to Government interventionism in the rural economy.

The Chambers-Feldman report, arguing that Botswana had inherited an economic structure with distortions and regional imbalances from the departing imperial power which had accumulated through the eighty years of colonial rule, specifically advocated a strong Government interventionist policy. But it also warned that mere allocation of public finance to the rural sector, especially rural infrastructural development, would not ensure rural development. It, therefore, called for more imaginative rural development programmes which would directly affect the rural economy by radically transforming the relations of production. The latter development, argued the report, would require a re-direction of public administration and technical expertise towards rural development and away from the expansion of urban-oriented mineral production.

However, because of its sensitivity, discussions about the impending land reforms were shelved on the eve of the 1974 national elections. As one political scientist has put it, those in power realised that the land policy issue would be politically unsettling, and consequently, the focus of political rhetoric was redirected to an accelerated rural development programme designed to demonstrate to the rural voter how much the ruling party was doing for rural areas (Picard, 1980). It is ironic that the BDP interpreted its electoral victory in 1974 as a mandate to implement the notorious TGLP. The fundamental question is why did it proceed with a pastoral development policy which was opposed by those supposedly intended to benefit from it; i.e. the "peasantry"?

The formal attainment of independence did not only accelerate processes of social differentiation engendered by colonial capitalist penetration in the rural economy but also intensified the (class) struggle for economic and political power thus exposing the often irreconcilable divergences in interests that had been concealed by the nationalist imperative of petty-bourgeoisie unity against colonialism and the legacy of poverty bequeathed to the nascent post-colonial state by the departing colonial power. This class polarisation was as much a product of the mineral boom of the early 1970s as it was an outcome of growing modern forms of patron-clientism uncharacteristic of those which prevailed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (see previous Chapter). Although the petty-bourgeoisie remained unified on the need for mining expansion, nationwide physical infrastructural development, an increase and improvement of livestock production, and a strengthening of the institutional framework to allow for the evolution of a more powerful and pervasive state, differences among individuals and the strata within the dominant ruling coalition became more pronounced in the 1970s (Parson, 1980).

The class unity, hitherto a useful instrument in maintaining the state, began to show signs of disintegration and it is not surprising that it was the agrarian element, influential in both the ruling party and its small but extremely powerful cabinet, which emerged in qualified form to rescue the situation (*ibid.*). The TGLP promoted the capitalization of the cattle industry and thus eased tensions arising from competition for resources for specific urban-based projects in the wake of the modernisation drive of the 1970s. Given the predominance of a "cattle mentality" among Batswana it was also an appropriate incentive and reward to those whose expectations had been aroused by political promises of prosperity after independence and these people were many. As Leach pointed out:

.... I remember so well how the lack of interest from Seretse down to a Motswana planning officer in dryland farming contrasted vividly with the immediate and intensive interest of all Batswana, whether cattleowners or not, in cattle and grazing (Leach, 1987, Interview).

The state was determined to use TGLP to silence its most vociferous critics. To most contemporary observers it was regarded as a profitable "land grab" enterprise (Cliffe and Moorsom, 1980). The bone of contention was that although exclusive use of land around watering points conferred *de facto* rights of ownership, albeit constitutionally insecure, land demarcation and the granting of long-term leases for exclusive use would go a long way towards allowing the cattle barons to satisfy the main conditions for a capitalist agriculture, namely the enclosure of land (Parson, 1984). Government policy towards the poor peasantry, and the manner in which it has continued to deal with the social dislocations wrought by the politically motivated rapid changes in rural relations of production, has been one of piecemeal containment. Rapidly rising, and endlessly available, revenue from enclave investment by transnational

corporations in diamonds and copper allowed the Government to satisfy most of the demands made upon it (see Chapters 4 and 6).

CHAPTER FOUR

POLITICS AND DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses several issues critical to the current debates on the political economy of development in the Third World (Migdal, 1987 and 1988). However, the major thrust of the chapter is specifically on the economic experience of Botswana in the post-independence era. So far as there is reference to the experiences of other countries, the intention is merely to provide a more poignant insight into the country's post-colonial political economy. In other words, there is more emphasis on the country's development in historical perspective than comparative statistical or cross-national studies. The chapter is in essence a critical appraisal of the Botswana developmental model. It covers the period between the formal attainment of independence in 1966 and the economic downswing experienced by the country in the early 1990s.

Before going into detailed analysis of the issues outlined above, it is important that we briefly consider the general intellectual perceptions advanced by other social scientists concerning the political economy of development in Botswana since 1966. The idea is to consider the general judgements put forward and then proceed to tie them down to specific historical periods. This periodisation perspective helps to prevent both ahistorical analysis and the unnecessary rehashing of long accepted conclusions about various aspects of rural development in Botswana.

(a) Organisation of the Themes

The chapter is divided into seven sections; excluding the conclusion. First, we assess the impact of the mineral boom on the economy as a whole and reflect on whether the frequent existence of substantial rents, that is, mineral revenues in excess of production costs and a nominal return on capital, captured by the BDP Government through taxation, influenced development in the appropriate directions. In particular we examine whether the domestic absorption of mining sector rents undermined peasant commodity production. The discussion draws upon the postulates and assumptions of the New Political Economy (NPE). The term New Political Economy refers to the extensive analyses carried out since the 1960s under a variety of names such as; public choice, rent-seeking, directly unproductive profit-seeking activities and most recently New Institutional Economics (NIEs). Early contributions to this varied corpus of development literature include, among others, Downs (1957), Riker (1962) and Buchanan and

Tullock (1962). These pioneering works were, however, largely confined to analyses of political processes in the more developed economies, especially those with liberal democratic institutions and systems of governance. Recently, however, such analyses has also been applied to certain sections of the Third World (see Krueger, 1974; Meier, 1991 and Grindle and Thomas, 1989). The latter contends that Governments are not benevolent maximizers of national welfare but rather arbitrators between conflicting interest groups or social classes. In the case of Africa, Bates (1981) is credited with having had a more enduring influence in applying this tradition in the study of African economic development; particularly the political economy of agricultural development. We address this aspect of Bates' contribution in Section 4.7. The argument is that under such circumstances, an economic boom like the one experienced in Botswana during the last three decades provides rents which constitute an important source of "political" capital.

The second section assesses the country's adjustment to mineral wealth and the impact of Government economic policy on the rural sector. It is argued that the onus of political arbitration bestowed upon the Government as guardian of the "public good" and sole arbiter as far as expenditure is concerned has had deleterious long-term effects with serious implications for national welfare in general and rural development in particular. The emergent development trajectory, as we shall see, has had intractable consequences for the ethics and efficiency of the administrative system.

In the third section the study attempts to examine more closely the precise conditions of developmental actions by the state with specific attention to the consequences for the agriculturally dominated rural economy. This approach is aimed at determining the factors important in generating, or standing in the way of, sustained developmental momentum in a single sector-led economy like Botswana. The socio-economic, political, and administrative characteristics of state developmental strategies and ideology are discussed.

The fourth part of the chapter discusses the evolution of agricultural orientated financial and administrative institutions, and it demonstrates how powerful urban based economic and political interests captured the state through the various units of its very enterprise sector. The result, as we shall see, was the weakening of both inherited colonial rural institutions and those that evolved in the post-independence period.

The fifth section demonstrates how the excise of political analysis from development theory, spear-headed by the World Bank whose involvement with Botswana dates back to the 1970s, has affected the trajectory of the country's post-colonial developmental model and its interpretations by academia.

In the sixth section we use empirical material to support our analysis and conclusions by quantitatively illustrating the impact of Government economic policy on the rural sector. Empirical evidence is provided to show the scale and depth of rural underdevelopment. In the seventh and final part of this chapter we assess the applicability of Bates' (1981) rational choice perspective, particularly, as presented in his publication *Markets and States in Tropical Africa: The Political Basis of Agricultural Policies*, to the Botswana context and attempt to provide a critique of its theoretical validity.

4.2 The State of Development

Botswana experienced the most rapid rate of growth of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita (8.8%) between 1965 and 1985 (World Bank, 1987). This was the highest rate in the world. The country's rate of real manufacturing value added (MVA) was the highest in the sub-saharan region. According to Harvey and Lewis (1990, p. 3) this manufacturing growth was in the same range in the international league tables as the Newly Industrialising Countries (NICs) of East Asia. The average annual growth rate between 1965 and 1991 was 13.0%. In the same period the average growth for most countries in the sub-saharan region was well below 4.0%. In 1989 the trade surplus reached US\$813 million, and foreign exchange reserves were approximately US\$4 billion. This spectacular growth was based on the exploitation of mineral resources.

Diamonds were discovered in 1969, and by 1989 they accounted for 80% of the total mineral value of Government revenue. Still, in 1989, the country produced 15.2 million carats from three open-cast mines (Orapa, Letlhakane, and Jwaneng), thus accounting for some 21% of total world output. Other minerals exploited include the less profitable coal at Morupule and copper-nickel at Selibe-Phikwe. A soda ash plant opened at the Sowa Town in 1994 and initially aimed at producing 3000 tonnes of soda ash (sodium carbonate) and 65,000 tonnes of table salt (sodium chloride) per annum for regional marketing, from a resource which is estimated to be "unlimited" (Moyo et al, 1993) but is currently experiencing capitalization problems. Its profitability is expected to be enormous in the future. Tourism and manufacturing are also expanding rapidly as are financial and public services (Harvey, 1995).

But, behind this panoply of impressive statistics, there is a growing uncertainty amongst economic experts, politicians, academics, bureaucrats, and international observers. The reality is that Botswana's sustained and rapid rates of growth are now over. The 1990/1995 National Development Plan (NDP 7) estimated annual growth rates to average about 4.6% in the 1990s. As it turned out growth rates have only exceeded this projection by a very tiny margin over the last couple of years but the point that the mineral boom is over is manifest in the negative

expectations of the Government. Unease within the political sphere about development challenges confronting Botswana in the 1990s was highlighted in the 1992 budget speech by the Vice-President and Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Festus Mogae, when he argued for a re-examination of the country's developmental trajectory.

The Minister, the first and only qualified economist to be appointed to the cabinet, observed that:

the decade ahead of us poses a very special challenge for both the Government and the nation. Sources of funds to finance recurrent and development expenditure are likely to be more constrained than in the past decade. Therefore emphasis in the 1990s must be directed along other lines. The productivity of our civil service must be improved; households must improve their savings and limit conspicuous consumption; the degree of cost recovery achieved for Government services must be raised; and the efficiency with which Government financial resources are used be enhanced (ROB, 1992c, p. 1).

The Minister went on to argue that:

it is incumbent upon us... to recognise that the promotion of the private sector, our farmers, manufacturers and other entrepreneurs is essential to diversification and national development (*ibid.*, p. 1).

Furthermore, the Minister advocated that high saving households be rewarded with positive incentives for their efforts, while lending rates that encouraged "borrowing for unproductive projects and unnecessary consumption" needed to be discouraged. Moreover, those who borrowed from banks had to be "forced" to honour their obligations to repay if they failed to do so. Espousing a "new doctrine" of "social responsibility" Mogae invited "citizens" to participate in national development programmes and developmental issues.

In these statements the finance minister was actually, consciously or unconsciously, making an unprecedented attack on the country's post-colonial developmental model. There are three critical implications from the Minister's statement which reflect Government concern. First, it would appear that there is now a realisation that developmental strategies during the preceding three decades encouraged low savings, poor productivity, inefficiency in economic management (especially financial intermediation - see quotation above) and conspicuous consumption. This is a direct negation of claims to the contrary which are so replete in Botswana's post-colonial historiographical literature (Harvey, 1990; Hill, 1991 and Hill and Mokgethi, 1989). Second, the Government belatedly recognises the significance of economic diversification of national development away from the booming mineral sector. We should therefore necessarily assess the implications of this turn of events for policy analysis of single commodity dependent development in Botswana.

Finally, by putting forward the "doctrine" of "social responsibility" the Government is now realising the importance of "popular participation" in economic development; this at a time when state-society relations have become central to political and economic analysis of development strategies and theory in sub-saharan Africa.

4.3 Wealth Adjustment and the Rural Sector

There is growing realisation in the economics literature on Botswana that the considerable expansion of the mineral sector has had a profound impact on the rural economy as a whole in several distinct ways. It is particularly argued that since substantial mineral revenues accrued directly to the state, which enjoyed monopolistic influence on how they could be spent, massive politico-bureaucratic involvement in livestock production has been enhanced with the result that the rural livestock sub-sector has benefited through input subsidies, lax taxation legislation, and other forms of institutional support (see Arntzen, 1990 and Love, 1994).

However, this view, while plausible, is rather narrow for our purposes here since it presupposes that agricultural development in the period under review can be treated as a homogeneous experience and implicitly implies that all types of social groups were equally affected and benefited from developmental programmes and Government economic policy. Such a perspective is seriously misleading and it has actually created misconceptions about the country in the eyes of the international community which seeks to influence trends in both foreign aid and direct investment. For instance, a prominent Zimbabwean business executive complained to an aghast conference of leading Botswana business persons and political leaders, including His Excellency the President of the Republic of Botswana Sir Ketumile Masire, that "the biggest obstacle to investment in Botswana [was] a continuing rural culture or cattlepost mentality" antithetical to modern business culture and "progressive development theory" (Charlton, 1994, p. 6).

The implication of this statement, of course, is that the alleged apparent reluctance of the Botswana to face up to the "culture change" that is a pre-requisite for modernisation could be traced to elite attitudes. There may be a grain of truth in this assertion, given the historical strength of pastoral attachment in Botswana, but it is, in the main, inconsistent with changes in elite attitudes and investment choices in the post-independence era. This is nowhere more evident than in the argument advanced by David Magang, discussed below.

A barrister, prominent businessman, and Member of Parliament for Kweneng East, David Magang was the first cabinet minister to criticise Botswana's post-independence developmental

model. The views of the minister were made public at the Botswana Society conference in Gaborone, in August, 1981. The Minister told a gathering of local and international academics, technocrats and development specialists that Government policy had in the preceding decade encouraged Batswana to be involved in rural-oriented business ventures, such as farming, as against the more profitable urban based industrial and commercial undertakings. This was facilitated, it was claimed, by making it overtly easier for them to obtain financial assistance to launch farming enterprises. Consequently, public and private financial institutions took the cue from Government policy, and felt more comfortable in granting loans to Batswana for farming purposes and were conversely reluctant to provide credit for urban based enterprises by local people.

There are serious assumptions, Magang observed, arising from this argument. First, Government economic policy endorsed, and financial institutions accepted, the philosophy that farming, especially livestock production, was cheap and profitable. Second, this attitude created the wrong impression that every Motswana is a potential farmer; a view, of course, later expressed as a matter of fact by the aforementioned Zimbabwean business executive. Magang concluded that these assumptions are false since (i) experience in Botswana has long established that not all Batswana are farmers by tradition or inclination (see Chapter two of this thesis); (ii) some Batswana do not invest in cattle for commercial purposes but do so for traditional and cultural reasons; and (iii) many Batswana, especially the educated youth, are potentially bad farmers or ranchers principally because they are urban dwellers (Magang, 1981).

While not necessarily rejecting the basic tenets of the argument outlined above and the assumptions pertaining thereto, we intend here to attempt a more rigorous analysis and interpretation of Botswana's post-independence developmental model and illustrate that peasant commodity production was adversely influenced by Government policy decisions in critical related areas thus precluding any positive role for individual initiative and market forces. We begin from the assumption that the rural economy was constrained by a complex pattern of forces in the economy as a whole. The latter effectively influenced technological innovation, the distribution of asset holding and relative prices in such a way that distinctive developmental features evolved in the rural sector which derived their structural and behavioral forms from the economy as a whole.

Central to our argument is the question of how the evolution of the state sector (public corporations, public societies, parastatals etc), influenced the interplay of these varied forces and how the result gave a distinctive shape to rural development. In other words, our argument is that albeit organisationally and juridically isolated from the Government, the state sector exerted tremendous influence on the rural economy, through the socio-economic unity of state as

producer of the state sector itself, on the one hand, and the state as a political and management organ, on the other hand.

4.4 Botswana: A Developmental State?

Recent studies have strenuously sought to demonstrate that Botswana's "developmental achievements" places it among the much discussed "miracle" economies of the post-Second World period; especially the East Asian newly industrialising countries (NICs); viz, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and Malaysia (Charlton, 1994 and Leftwich, 1994 and 1995). World Bank economists, and most of the apologists of the Bank's stand on the state of affairs in the Third World today, have consistently reinforced this argument by pointing out that Botswana has achieved "developmental characteristics", through the structures of the state, that qualifies it to be a model of excellence in sub-saharan Africa (World Bank, 1984, 1989a and 1989b). We analyze these arguments here and conclude that such characterisations, albeit intellectually appealing and very much convenient to those obsessed with comparative historical analysis, are actually misleading since they are based on false premises.

A detailed study of the "developmental dynamics" of a developing country like Botswana encompass structural issues which are more complex than the traditional concerns in terms of capabilities and sustainability that have up to now dominated the developmental school. Focusing our attention on the historical experiences of agrarian reforms and the rural economy in post-independence Botswana, we demonstrate that the case for the evolution of a developmental state in Botswana is at best a tenuous one.

(a) Background and Meaning of a Developmental State

In a compelling recent article, Leftwich (1995) illustrates how the theoretical debate regarding the idea of a developmental state can be traced back to the works of Marx (1973) and Gerschenkron (1962). Development literature indicates that for many years Marxist scholars tended to associate their rudimentary notion of the developmental state with the historical development of the capitalist state in Europe. The capitalist state, as it evolved in Europe, is characterised in one text as

... an active, autonomous agent from the sixteenth century onwards, pursuing its own interests by harnessing those of others to its purposes (Elster, 1985, p. 426).

Gerschenkron (1962), however, considered the role of a developmental state in the backward countries of the world and, using the examples of late nineteenth century France, Russia and

Germanic Prussia, concluded that the historical function of such a state was to act as a substitute for the missing factors of production and, therefore, spur on the developmental momentum.

The idea and practice of a developmental state in the Third World is largely associated with the colonial welfare and development policies pursued by some "progressive" imperial powers in the pre-independence period. However it must be realised that analysis of the "Third World developmental state" has remained largely confined to Latin America and South East Asia. It is also important to observe that the theoretical linkage of such a state to both development theory and institutional policy issues is still very much disputed, with the possible exception of the East Asian experiences.

In fact some commentators have strongly argued that the issue of "state and development" as transposed in contemporary development studies is unlikely to inspire intellectual interest in desolate regions like sub-saharan Africa where debilitating economic conditions tend to render state activism in the pursuit of developmental goals undesirable given the predominant low growth rates, budgetary constraints, internal contradictions and unfavourable international environment (Fine and Stoneman, 1995).

The above argument is probably true for a number of countries in Africa. However, Botswana has a relatively impressive developmental record as mentioned before, and various studies have sought to apply the developmental model approach to the country's development experience. But the application of this model to Botswana has not only failed to produce convincing theoretical conclusions but has also distorted the analytical framework of the model itself. This anomaly needs to be rectified.

(b) Basic Tenets of the Developmental State

According to Leftwich (1995, p. 405) there are six major components that define the developmental state model; viz,

- a) a determined developmental elite;
- b) relative autonomy;
- c) a powerful, competent and insulated economic bureaucracy;
- d) a weak and subordinated civil society;
- e) the effective management of non-state economic interests; and
- f) repression, legitimacy and performance.

All these institutional and ideological features are extensively evident in both the economics literature on Botswana and the political rhetoric of the ruling class.

Botswana's state enterprise sector has drawn praise from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund for the simple reason that it is perceived, by the two, to be approaching the model that they prefer. There are only ten state enterprises and parastatals in the country as compared to Tanzania's four hundred plus such organisations (Mukandala, 1988, 1992). The World Bank's obsession with the size and number of state enterprises in the less developed countries is well-known and, as usual, Botswana gets its marks for, among other things, resisting

... the pressure to which many other African countries have succumbed to create state owned enterprises (World Bank, 1986, p. 7).

Another claim that appears in the literature is that the choice of development projects and institutional expansion are always dictated by economic rationality instead of political expediency. The World Bank specifically contends that the Government "has chosen projects and determined" the "mix of public investment carefully" (*ibid.*, pp. 7-10). Not loathe to exaggeration where the proselytisation of its economic doctrines is concerned, the Bank maintains that:

... Botswana has built an enviable reputation as having one of the most effective public sector managements in Africa and indeed among developing countries (1984, p. ix).

All these alleged "developmental characteristics" are generally attributed to the "prudence", "level headedness", "farsightedness", "relative sophistication and reach" and invariably "economic rationality" of the Government. Elsewhere it has also been argued that Botswana chooses projects on the basis of their economic and social returns (Harvey and Lewis, 1990, p. 8).

These claims deserve close examination in the light of the serious strain imposed on the national economy, throughout much of the early 1990s, by the post-colonial development model. It is also clear from these statements that deliberate efforts are being made to elevate the experience of Botswana to that of the Asian NICs but, surprisingly enough, the historical context of Botswana is neglected and, furthermore, analysis of national politics is excised; an approach rarely applied to other developing countries. Consequently, the imagined developmental momentum that was so easy to sustain during the years of relative prosperity crumbles in the wake of 'unforeseen' political constraints in the early 1990s. The latter are the subject of the next two chapters.

(c) The World Bank, Governance and the Case of Botswana

First and foremost, it is crucial that social science should clearly comprehend the World Bank's conception of "good governance" and its application to the Botswana context. There is no doubt that arguments for and against state interventionism have since the early 1980s been heavily predicated upon an agenda set by the World Bank and the IMF. The World Bank advocates a minimalist interpretation of governance which is primarily administrative and managerial in nature (Leftwich, 1994). It also closely associates governance with competitive democratic politics.

Botswana, unlike the majority of other African countries where the World Bank alleges that poor governance has been a major source of economic crisis (World Bank, 1989), stands out as a perfect example of the appropriateness of the Bank's model of good governance. In its highly publicised report on the African crisis, *Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth* (World Bank, 1984), the Bank puts forward a development theory that relegated the political causes of African crisis to the back burner and emphatically focused on managerial and techno-administrative pre-requisites for the evolution and sustenance of developmental states on the continent. The so-called Botswana success story was invoked and extensively quoted to illustrate the feasibility and desirability of "administrative" and "developmental states" in Africa; this in spite of the obvious historical and geo-political differences among the various continental states.

This argument, academic opposition notwithstanding, eventually found institutional assent in *Governance and Development* (World Bank, 1992b). In these and other highly influential publications, like the *World Development Report* (1991), the Bank steadfastly emphasised apolitical and largely technical strategies for improving governance in the less developed regions of the world and

... advocated... a slim but efficient administrative state, detached from its prior involvement in economic matters. While such a state might undertake basic investment in, and management of essential physical and social infrastructure, its central role was to encourage the free and fair play of market forces in an impartial, open and accountable manner (World Bank, 1991, pp. 4-11; paraphrased in Leftwich, 1994, p. 369).

Botswana, though regarded as a multi-party political democracy, not very much atypical from westminster type of democracy, is in reality overwhelmingly dominated by the BDP Government, incumbent since the attainment of independence in 1966. Whilst the fact that the ruling party has consistently won elections, in fact seven consecutive times, with monotonous regularity, may be regarded academically as perhaps an unfortunate manifestation of the "dictatorship of

democracy", the truth is that the country's body politic leaves much to be desired; a factor that we will return to later on in this chapter.

It has been argued that the BDP Government actually lacks any over-riding ideology or political mechanism to communicate within the country and that the much talked about pluralism simply masks an underlying administrative unity (Picard, 1979a, 1979b and 1980). One social scientist, in perhaps rather simplistic terms, identified this "administrative unity" with the Weberian "administrative state" and concluded that

... the social order is distinguishable from the administrative order. Resources are allocated by administrative elites, and there is no control by any other group over decision-making. Authority... flows downward from the rulers to the ruled; the administrative elites have complete control and domination over the decision-making process in the administrative state (Gunderson, 1971, p. 7).

Recent studies have further sought to affirm the thesis that Botswana political elites are content to delegate decision-making to their bureaucratic cadre with whom they share a number of socio-economic characteristics; not least of which is the over-riding interest in livestock production (Vengroff, 1977; Picard, 1980; Parson, 1981; Worby, 1988; Love, 1994 and Charlton, 1991).

This "administrative state" which comprised of a small political establishment with less than fifteen cabinet ministers, the President and Vice-President plus twenty three parliamentarians, had already, in 1979, increased to thirty four elected and four "specially elected" members of the National Assembly in 1991 (Danevad, 1992). Following the 1994 national general elections the number of members of the National Assembly rose to well over forty. This institutional framework also includes the House of Chiefs, representing the traditional leadership of the country (Proctor, 1968), which has fifteen members and is merely incorporated in the law making process to advise on customary juridical matters.

The bureaucracy, comprising state civil servants at the central and local Government levels increased rather too rapidly in the same period and it is now incapable of absorbing the annually increasing entrants in the labour market. The bureaucracy in Botswana, as elsewhere in much of Africa, is too big, poorly organised, inefficient, unproductive and ostensibly corrupt (Charlton, 1994 and Good, 1994). However, it is very difficult to provide even a most conservative estimate of the whole political strata of Botswana. This is particularly the case because, despite the well-known problem of statistical inaccuracies, the mode of class formation in the country is very complex.

A prominent local social scientist cynically observed not long ago that

... a senior civil servant... called a bureaucrat can at the same time be businessman and a leading farmer. Or a politician... can and [are] often usually both leading farmers and small business owners (Moiutsi, 1988, p. 6).

The only clear thing is that the ruling classes in the country generally resemble those of most developing countries. For analytical purposes the following are distinguishable in the political strata of Botswana:

- a) elected representatives; for example, members of parliament, councillors, and village development committee members;
- b) tribal rulers, especially chiefs and headmen;
- c) the bureaucracy, that is, senior officers in the civil service, parastatal organisations, the private sector as well as the army and the police force;
- d) the business elite, and
- e) leading livestock and crop farmers.

It may strike the reader here as odd that "leading farmers" and the "business elite" are classified as members of the ruling elite. The surprise is theoretically understandable, but it is also indicative of the shortcomings of grand theorisation. These are oddities conditioned by both historical and cultural experiences which always render the use of "universal class definitions" somewhat redundant.

A survey by the Botswana Democracy Project group in 1987 found that 80% of members of parliament and councillors interviewed were farmers and that some of them actually owned extensive ranches. Over 60% were also commercial and industrial business persons. Outside the national assembly and other institutions, many influenced policy as members of governing boards of public utilities and parastatal enterprises (*ibid.*). Furthermore, it is normal practice, or indeed often expected, that retired civil servants join politics. Many, like the current Vice-President and Minister of the Development and Finance, are recruited by the ruling party from the civil service and appointed directly to cabinet positions.

The result of this mode of class formation and configuration, whereby a complex combination of socio-economic, cultural, political, and educational opportunities are employed in the interest of

both individual advancement and partisan politics, is a situation whereby a bureaucrat, for example, supposedly actively involved in making a policy decision that affects the country at large, is compelled by divided loyalties, to disregard the "public good". Of course, this "straddling" process is fairly common in much of Africa (Illife, 1983) and generally accepted as such but, in Botswana, social scientists and the national intelligentsia have tended to avoid the exposure of its pervasive nature on both institutional development and economic policy. As well-noted by two prominent academics who have worked in Botswana for almost twenty years, as outside consultants, and who pioneered rural development campaigns and continue to dominate the monitoring of rural services, many researchers are aware of the extreme degree of rural underdevelopment but they are afraid of highlighting this problem lest they solicit angry reactions from Government officials and possibly undermine the chances of more competent programme proposals in the future (Hitchcock and Holm, 1993). This apprehension has possibly led to some of the adverse effects of rural underdevelopment as highlighted in the last part of this chapter and chapter 5 of this thesis.

(d) Technocrats, Politicians and Economic Policy

The Economic Committee of the Cabinet (ECC), a shadowy "advisory body" comprising the President, fifteen cabinet ministers, the governor of the Bank of Botswana (BoB), all permanent secretaries and heads of defence and police forces, although formed initially to assure interaction of professionals, civil servants and politicians at the Government level, is in effect the most important policy forum with regard to economic policy as a recent brilliant thesis has clearly pointed out (Danevad, 1992). Thus, in contrast to the earlier characterisation by Gunderson that the policy-making strata in Botswana resembles nothing more than the typical Weberian "administrative state", it seems more appropriate to conclude that a symbiotic relationship has over the years evolved between a careerist-oriented administrative sphere and the political establishment. The result has been the emergence of a ruling class assumed by some to be able to "exercise... political power to manage a nation's affairs" (World Bank, 1989b, p. 60).

The critical question, however, is not the structural configuration of the final arbiters in decision making per se, but the ability with which they can clearly perceive and pursue a country's developmental prospects and potentialities. Both comparative historical studies and cross-national statistical analysis indicate that, although regime types may be important for development in certain contexts, they do not always significantly influence economic outcomes (Limongi and Perzeworski, 1993).

Thus the crucial question is whether Botswana's politico-administrative and technocratic elites have had a clear perception of the country's developmental prospects and potentialities. If so, as

Charlton (1994) claims, how have they mobilised the resources at their disposal to create a sustainable developmental momentum?

Botswana's failure to diversify its economy away from the enclave mineral boom sector is largely acknowledged in the economics literature (Curry, 1987; Parkinson, 1992; Good, 1993 and Valentine, 1993a and 1993b). These, however, being largely macroeconomic studies, have shied away from addressing the political and structural problems that rendered post-colonial developmental efforts to fail to ameliorate the socio-economic welfare of the peasantry. These developmental constraints, we argue here, emanated directly from the construction and subsequent complexion of the post-colonial state enterprise sector. This is in spite of its much praised diminutive size. In other words, "small is not always beautiful and good" as the World Bank and its apologists would like us to believe.

4.5 Political Economy of Parastatal Enterprises in Botswana

The study of parastatal organisations and public utilities in Botswana has not as yet attracted many researchers. The reasons for this are very unclear but one cannot help but venture to assume that intellectual fad, among other things, is to blame. Macroeconomic studies continue to enjoy popularity in the national historiography, and it was only in the late 1980s that political economy of development started seriously to dissect and analyze the internal contradictions of development in the country. Be that as it may, this thesis will demonstrate that the evolution and expansion of the state enterprise sector in the post-colonial era has culminated in serious sectoral imbalances and that the rural sector has particularly suffered as vested interests captured the state through the various units of its very own enterprise sector. Rural institutional development has particularly been affected by urban biased state economic policies since 1965.

Political bargaining power was the crucial weapon in this seizure of the state by economic classes. As centre-periphery relations emerged, the peasantry found itself trapped in a vicious cycle of stagnation and polarisation. But, how did this happen in a country that prides itself on an unblemished record of universal adult suffrage and majority rule? Is it possible that sub-imperialist relations of production can subsist under the modern contractual theories and practices of social justice?

As briefly mentioned in Chapter 3 of this thesis, only two state enterprises were established in the Bechuanaland Protectorate by the British Imperial Government. The Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC), a sprawling, but well financed colonial venture with business connections in Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, Nigeria and Tanzania, among other places, created the Bechuanaland Protectorate Abattoirs Limited (BPAL). The latter was the predecessor to the

current Botswana Meat Commission (BMC). It was founded in 1954. The colonial administration, convinced that the cattle industry was the single most important economic boat for its beleaguered colonial possession, firmly supported the creation of the BMC (Stedman, 1993).

But on the eve of independence, as established and emerging class alliances took new form and shape in the pursuit of political and economic fortunes in the wake of the granting of self-governing status in November 1965, the nationalist petty bourgeoisie coalition, led by Sir Seretse Khama, adroitly nationalised the BMC. Subsequently, the BMC was drastically reorganised ostensibly to garner political support. As one authority on the Botswana beef market succinctly put it

... nationalisation, planned since the 1950s was precipitated in the mid-1960s... to all appearances, by the political convenience of having nationalisation coincide with independence to boost the party favoured by the outgoing colonial Government (Hubbard, 1982, p. 226).

The BDP made it clear in its 1965 election manifesto that it would accelerate

... the process of turning the BPAL into a statutory corporation in order to give the cattle producers a bigger say in its affairs (Quoted in Parson, 1984, p. 105).

While the nationalisation of the abattoir may have helped put the cattle industry, the single most important income earning economic activity in Botswana at the time, under the control of cattle producers in lieu of the much maligned fatteners and speculators (mostly undercapitalised fortune-seekers from the Republic of South Africa and neighbouring Southern Rhodesia), it had the undesired effect of permanently alienating small stockholders (see Mukandala, 1992, p. 125). Also no measures were taken to accommodate landless peasants who did not benefit directly from this national project. Only the rich and powerful benefited. But as Harvey and Lewis (1990) drily observe "Botswana's Government was largely a Government of cattlemen" (p. 9). This probably explains the wholesale neglect of the economically marginalised sections of the peasantry.

It must be noted, however, that contrary to repeated assertions by the World Bank that Botswana's public sector management record is a paragon of excellence, the managerial competence and organisational performance of most corporations in the country have been such a shambles that the state treasury has had to spend millions of taxpayers money in rescue operations designed to keep them afloat. As we shall see, agricultural state sector enterprises have particularly had a dismal record in terms of management and delivery.

The National Development Bank (NDB) was the second agricultural state enterprise to evolve during the pre-independence period. Formed in 1963, just three years before the granting of political independence, it was also revamped structurally in the immediate post-independence period. The popular perception within the Gaborone Government was that while the reconstituted BMC served the purposes of marketing cattle well, financial capital for the improvement of water supply technologies (a theme extensively covered in Chapter 2 of this thesis), research into better breeds, veterinary services, and ranch creation and management were not forthcoming. The NDB, it was agreed, had to be reorganised in order to be used as an agency of change. The Minister of Finance, Quett Masire, argued that the NDB had to be utilised as an instrument of Government policy for "economic empowerment" (BNA, 1966). This was to be achieved through the injection of credit into "progressive" African agricultural undertakings.

More controversial, however, was the nonsensical endorsement of the Chacko Mission recommendation, by the Minister with parliamentary approval, that political appointees, referred to as "senior Government officials", had to sit on the board of the Bank. One of these two had to assume the chairmanship of NDB. It was also agreed that

... credit... be injected into the 'Africa sector'(sic)... [and]... a more dynamic approach in the lending policies... be adopted by accepting higher risks and unorthodox security (Mukandala, 1992, p. 124).

Between 1966 and 1967, these recommendations, with minor modifications, acquired parliamentary assent and were thus legislated into law. The result was the birth of a so-called "small farmers" bank with a very liberal lending policy essentially beneficial to propertied rich Batswana farmers and not the small farmers originally targeted. However, its very profligacy was almost to result in its liquidation in the 1980s as we shall see.

(a) Livestock Sub-Sector, Class Politics and the State Enterprise Sector

Poor management, complacency, corruption, and self-aggrandizement became the order of the day at NDB. Subsequent to its establishment, it overextended itself by proceeding to open a number of branches around the country. Initially, the NDB required its borrowers to make cash payments to the bank as a deposit before the disbursement of loan funds. This made business sense in that it brought some needed revenue to the bank. The obvious negative side-effect, of course, was the fact that most small farmers and landless peasants could not raise the 20% cash deposit required by the bank to partake of its credit facilities. In 1980 Benjamin Gassenewelwe succeeded G. W. Woodcock, an expatriate employee, as the man in charge at the NDB and immediately set out to re-orient the bank's functions and priorities. The former belonged to a more enlightened generation of post-independence Botswana who benefited from

the new and aggressive Government localisation and economic indigenisation policies of the early 1980s (1).

On June 12, 1980, the *Botswana Daily News*, a Government mouthpiece, carried as its lead story the exciting news, under the banner "NDP scraps 20% deposit: farmers stand to benefit" (p. 1). The paper boasted that "... credit facilities have been brought closer home to the majority of Batswana" and that "the pace to the credit coffers of the NDB is expected to pick up momentum with the scrapping of the 20% cash deposit in the Bank's credit system" (*ibid.*). In an interview Gassenewelwe sought to justify the discontinuation of the 20% cash deposit to the development bank in populist terms by saying:

... the reason is simply that this does not seem to be consistent with the accepted development practices and procedures, because really... the borrower was paying cash to the bank and not to the project. We feel it's not the correct way a development bank has to raise its money, because the money went into the coffers of the bank (*ibid.*, p. 1).

As a result of this, yet another credit liberalisation measure, all roads did lead to the NDB. The consequences for the mismanaged and undercapitalised development bank were calamitous. In 1984 the Government, held to ransom by agricultural producers, at a most challenging election year, was forced to write-off well over P2 million of the NDB arable farmers' debt. Four years later, in 1988, with another general national election looming and a shrinking urban political support base, the BDP Government had, yet again, to save the NDB from imminent liquidation by writing-off over P24 million in debt payments owed by both arable and livestock farmers (Holm and Molutsi, 1989).

But even this rescue operation could not save the NDB from further crisis. Towards the end of 1993 the NDB was confronted by yet another bankruptcy threat. As noted by one commentator:

the NDB's accumulated losses had by March [1993] totalled P41.1 million. Outstanding loans amounted to P91.3 million, of which over one-third were in arrears, most for more than six months. The Government's equity position was a negative P15.6 million. In addition, the Small Borrowers Fund, administered by the NDB for the Government, had at the same time accumulated losses of P32.4 million; 70% of its accounts were in arrears, almost all in excess of six months. By November, the NDB was losing P450,000 a month (Good, 1994, p. 509).

On 19 January 1991, the acerbic weekly tabloid, *Midweek Sun*, reported that the Vice-President and Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Festas Mogae, had admitted at a Radio Botswana press conference that the NDB was owed more than P60 million in arrears and that

borrowers were refusing to service their loans. As it turned out the estimation by Molutsi and Holm that the Government had to write off P2 million and about P24 million in 1984 and 1988, respectively, in order to save the NDB from imminent collapse was an understatement.

According to the 1991 Budget Speech, P31 million had been provided by the Government in 1988 in order to write off bad debts. A parliamentary statement by the Assistant Minister of Finance, Edison Masisi, appeared in the *Botswana Gazette* newspaper on 30 March 1994. In the article the minister reveals that loans to the NDB had been written off in 1985/1986 and 1988/1989. According to the minister the total cost to the tax payer engendered by these rescue operations amounted to more than P35.5 million. The parlous position of the NDB in the 1980s and the early 1990s is attributable to a number of administrative, political and economic factors.

First, there was rapid and irresponsible expansion of lending in the 1980s following the liberalisation of credit facilities as mentioned above; especially the scrapping of the 20% cash deposit previously required by the NDB from its clients prior to disbursement of loan funds in 1980. As a result of this liberalisation measure, loans and investments increased ten-fold from 1980 to reach P47.2 million in 1988. Remedial measures to cover the write offs of bad debts by the NDB since 1982 amounted to P36 million, with P31 million being deployed for this purpose in 1988 alone (Good, 1994).

Second, the Bank's lending policy was also at fault in a technical sense. For example Good, using press interviews of disgruntled NDB employees, including unsigned documents listing NDB loans to Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament, makes the startling revelation that the Bank habitually sanctioned the rescheduling of loans on an across-the-board basis, neglecting individuals' creditworthiness. Thirdly, the practice of writing-off loans interminably possibly led to the wrong conception on the part of borrowers, some of whom were credit-worthless anyway (see *Botswana Gazette*, 9 February 1994), that loans need not be repaid because their eventual cancellation could be safely anticipated.

The fourth explanation for the structural weaknesses of the NDB has much to do with political interference. As one highly respected newspaper pointed out, "political interference, especially on lending, [has] over the years made an important contribution to the collapse of the bank" (Mmegi Wa Dikgang, 21 January 1994). Good reveals that the NDB board was dominated by civil servants and that its collective strength, independence and autonomy vis-à-vis Ministers was comparatively weak. A document leaked to the press, and later validated by independent sources, shows the extent to which the NDB, a so-called "small farmers" bank was abused for purposes of self-aggrandizement by the rich and powerful.

By September 1993 the Assistant Minister of Finance owed NDB P42,000. The Minister of Mineral Resources and Water Affairs, a former diplomat with international renown, had acquired a loan of P26,000. Lieutenant-General Mompoti Merafhe, who was also the Minister of Presidential Affairs, owed P47,000. This embarrassing accumulation of debts by Cabinet Ministers, all of them in default for over six months, and furthermore indebted to an already beleaguered financial institution fighting for survival, was replicated across the national political spectrum with Ministers like P. H. K. Kedikilwe and prominent BDP backbencher Johnny Swart, owing P260,000 million and P1,210,000 million, respectively.

President Sir Ketumile Masire owed P568,000 even though he is considered the most successful farmer in the country. His affluent younger brother, a successful businessman in his own right, figured top of the list of 15 substantial debtors revealed towards the end of 1993. It later transpired he had never made any effort whatsoever to service an outstanding loan of P1.2 million to the NDB. From this empirical data it is clear that the NDB was in essence a financial institution under siege. As for some of the Bank staff, this credit system must have worked to their advantage for, it was reported in early 1994 they had obtained loans which totalled over P7 million (Good, 1994).

(b) Electoral Politics and Economic Policy Issues

It may appear simplistic to the reader that elections affect public policy so much in Botswana. But the reality is that elections have an effect, directly and indirectly, on public policies in many countries that practice democratic competitive politics. Studies indicate that in democratic Africa, Botswana included, what appear to be issues in an election may actually be surrogates for "other issues" which cannot be debated publicly (Hayward, 1987). To most voters, elections are associated with questions of power. Ideally, voters exercise power by making a choice, while the elected people gain access to power by holding political office.

However, in the world of practical politics, elections usually provide opportunities for the manipulation of public sentiment by political elites. Politicians, especially in the context of Botswana, are wont to view electoral outcome as an affirmation of both faith in the political system in general and an indication of support for specific policies in particular (Holm and Molutsi, 1992). Whenever public sentiment changes, as illustrated, for instance, in mob demonstrations, workers' strikes, growth of opposition parties and increasingly diminishing voter turnout, the temptation to maintain a modicum of confidence and satisfaction, even if this is at the expense of particular policy choices, becomes an inevitability. This is particularly the case for Botswana since 1984 (2).

It has been suggested elsewhere that most politicians in Botswana regard elections as a means to capture and retain power (Bratton and Hyden, 1992). One may want to know why politicians, especially those belonging to the BDP, ever feel threatened by the possibility of losing their grip on power since their party has, in spite of the legal existence of multiple opposition parties, consecutively won elections for well over a generation. In fact the ritual of politics in Botswana is peculiar to say the least. Although the electoral outcome has, at least until recently, always been predictable, the electoral process has consistently commanded the attention of both the political elite and the opposition (Holm, 1987). There are several explanations for this apparent tendency towards "quasi-democratic ritual". First, the poorly organised opposition parties have for far too long displayed a manifest inclination to narrow based enclave ethnic and class political agendas. Second, the BDP, incumbent since independence, has conversely remained an amalgam of dynamic class, ethnic and racial elements from across the social spectrum. Finally, the staid political scene that has hitherto characterised political trends in the country was possibly influenced by the existence of a liquid economy (Parkinson, 1992) (3).

Be that as it may, the structural composition of the BDP, whilst ideologically and theoretically consistent with the spirit of nation-building, gave rise to tough internal competition and rivalry. The result was the evolution of patron-clientist relations designed to stave off breakaways and maintain political unity. It was against this historical background that the state enterprise sector almost spontaneously evolved simultaneously with dominant socio-economic class forces resulting in the direction of development away from the rural population (Osborne, 1986). Internal wrangling and rivalry for political positions within the ruling party became more pronounced and intense following the introduction of the so-called "party primary elections" in 1984.

Before they could stand for elections, BDP political candidates now had first to contest for constituency representation with contenders from within the party. The result was that a "talent effect" prevailed leading to an unprecedented influx into the higher echelons of the party structure of mainly younger and more educated Batswana with extensive experience in the civil service. The latter were eager to introduce radical policy changes - a situation which explains the reorientation of Botswana's post-colonial developmental model in the 1990s. These political developments also confirmed the concept that Botswana's post-independence civil service is too politicised. As we shall see, the politicisation of the civil service has had a direct impact on economic development with serious consequences for the political economy of rural development.

(c) Inclusive Politics and Small Farmers

It is common knowledge that the majority of BDP leaders, especially the old guard, have insisted over the years that prior to each national election a sizable number of Government sponsored development programmes have a grassroots payoffs. This exercise has been known to prevail regardless of the efficiency effects often involved. It is argued that inspite of their counter-productiveness, these programmes are deemed necessary so that politicians on campaign trails can point in every village to something that they could arguably associate with the benefits of their rule (Bratton and Hyden, 1992).

It has already been noted that parastatal enterprises in Botswana have been conceived and utilised by the ruling party as a means of consolidating and perpetuating state power. It has even been argued that exclusionary forms and methods have been implanted in the structures of parastatal enterprises, like the Botswana Power Corporation (BPC), the Water Utilities Corporation (WUC), the Botswana Housing Corporation (BHC) and the Botswana Development Corporation (BDC) in the interests of state self-protection and promotion (Mukandala, 1988). Thus, the design and operation of the state enterprise sector have been largely influenced by the quest for hegemony on the part of the ruling coalition.

But one factor which has not been addressed so far is the question of how the establishment, growth, and differentiation of state structures, and the redefinition of the positions of various social and political formations, groups, and organisational networks within the wider state context impacted on the rural economy. Why did the ensemble of economic processes, discussed in the previous chapter, by which the political, administrative and juridical centre of the Botswana state could be felt fail to establish an effective and authoritative presence in the rural economy?

To answer this question we need to consider the motives behind the establishment of agricultural oriented state enterprise sectors and also explain why the state failed to acquire a capacity to mobilise resources to implement its economic policies and pursue its developmental goals. Mention has already been made about the NDB and the BMC. Now we introduce two more agricultural orientated corporations, viz; the Botswana Livestock Development Corporation (BLDC) and the Botswana Agricultural Marketing Board (BAMB). By organisational structure and orientation, the latter statutory bodies were designed to cater for both arable grain producers and small cattle producers. Arable subsistence producers and small peasant cattleholders, finding themselves economically neglected and alienated by the big cattle barons, through the latter's virtually exclusive access to the NDB and BMC market facilities, exacted alarming punishment on the ruling party by voting for the opposition in numbers large enough to swing the BDP's

popular support from a phenomenal 80% in 1965 to 69% in the 1969 national elections (see Chapter 6).

The BLDC, a subsidiary of the BMC, was created in 1973 to help small cattle farmers who found it increasingly difficult to sell their cattle directly to the BMC abattoir (slaughterhouse) singularly situated in Lobatse town in the south eastern part of the country. Explaining the aims and functions of the BLDC, the Minister of Agriculture, E.S. Masisi, said that the corporation was "a part and parcel of the BMC" and that it was operating lawfully under the ministry to facilitate the process of "conducting livestock sales as near as possible to the people, especially in the remote areas..." (4). Until recently, Botswana's marketing system for the export of beef has been rather complex. The BMC does not only handle meat processing, but it also issues monthly quotas for a specific number of herds usually based on seller requests (Hendrick and Sterkenburg, 1987).

Consequently, the BMC holds a monopoly over the beef export market as it also sets prices based on its own devised quality grading system. Producers are disadvantaged in that they incur non-subsidised transport costs to the abattoir. As a result, the sale of cattle from remote areas, or cattle in poor condition, has always been relatively unattractive and occasionally counterproductively painful to smallholders who normally sell their stock in times of emergency and not for commercial purposes (Holm, 1987).

Sellers to the BMC are of three types:

- a) registered BMC agents;
- b) livestock marketing cooperatives; and
- c) farmers selling directly to the corporation.

Small peasant farmers scattered in the remote areas of the country have invariably tended to rely heavily on the services of BMC registered agents. For instance, in the 1991/1992 BMC financial year, export earnings from beef amounted to about P255 million. The corporation had slaughtered 215,000 cattle, out of which 66% were supplied by agents, 22% by cooperatives, and the remaining 12% came through direct owners (Mannathoko, 1992). Formally, agents charge handling fees of not more than 2.5% (*ibid.*). However, the number of registered agents has always been limited and some unscrupulous operators, especially speculating middlemen and non-resident fatteners, have tended to be manipulative and unreliable.

The BLDC aimed at fattening cattle in its own ranches and then marketing them to the BMC on behalf of small farmers. It was intended to operate livestock sales through its branch farms spread across the country, thus providing market outlets for owners of cattle in rural areas.

According to the Ministry of Agriculture, the BLDC was supposed to pay cattle owners a high initial rate for their animals and return any profits at the end of the year to them in the form of a different payment [or bonus] (5). However, right from its inception, the corporation was incredibly undercapitalised. Its capital gearing (leverage) ratio was almost 6:1 and this was further exacerbated by the fact that no provision whatsoever was made for working capital (Mukandala, 1992).

The weak capital structure of the BLDC affected the quality of its services to the rural poor. The tragic plight of the BLDC branch farm at Makalamabedi provides a good example of this weakness. The farm, created to provide a market outlet to small farmers in Ngamiland and Boteti, had a holding capacity of 7,000 cattle (6). In February 1975, only two years after the establishment of the corporation, the Makalamabedi farm had to cancel sale operations indefinitely due to overstocking (7). Such logistic problems left small peasant farmers with little choice but to depend on the services of corrupt and inept livestock marketing cooperatives and middlemen.

The BAMB was established in 1974 for three reasons. First, it aimed at stabilising grain prices. Second, it also sought to promote milling and storage of all grains. Finally, it was charged with responsibility for controlling the import and export of maize. In addition to ensuring adequate supplies of food grains to the consumers, the board also had to provide a guaranteed market at fixed minimum prices to producers. The undercapitalisation of the Board, however, meant that, like the BLDC, it had serious problems in establishing its activities in areas of low production with sparse populations - a problem admitted by the Minister of Agriculture in parliament (8). The Government was initially unwilling to bail out these corporations from their financial doldrums as it did with the other parastatals (Mukandala, 1988 and 1992).

Although it is not clear why this state of affairs obtained, it is apparent that BAMB and BLDC served a constituency without staying political clout and, consequently, suffered the fate of being deprived of operating capital and permanent development. The BAMB, however, was able to cut short-term profiteering in the internal trade but its price levels were effectively determined by those of South African imports since official policy kept the Botswana market open (Cliffe and Moorsom, 1980).

(d) The World Bank Perspective: Jaundice or Dogma?

Why has the World Bank and its apologists consistently misrepresented facts about public sector management in Botswana and socio-economic welfare? Extensive research indicates that, contrary to the myth propagated by the Bank and its army of development experts, Botswana's

public sector organisations have largely achieved very modest success and the state has had periodically to bail its enterprises out of extreme financial distress using a multiplicity of measures like

... direct grants, interest decapitalisation, suspension of loan and/or interest payments, conversion of loans into equity, increasing authorised share capital, extension of loans, hikes in rates charged by corporations, reevaluation of assets.... (Mukandala, 1992, p. 135).

The argument that Botswana's political economy of development attests to the conception that political explanations matter a lot in the analyses of economic phenomena is very persuasive indeed. The apolitical postulates of the World Bank development scholars are misleading and reflect a position too abstract from the reality of post-independence developmental experience. The apparent weaknesses of rural financial and administrative institutions in Botswana between 1965 and the early 1990s is directly associated with the nature of national politics in the country. We now proceed to address the issue of political explanations for economic outcomes within the context of Botswana.

4.6 Depoliticisation and a Peasantry Under Stress

(a) Adjustment to Windfall Gains

The manner in which the Gaborone Government has sought to manage its mineral booms has received critical acclaim in development studies. It has been emphasised *ad nauseam* that the pursuit of an appropriate mix of macroeconomic policies, in response to variable diamond receipts, has, among other things, prevented balance of payment deficits and associated adjustment costs (Hill, 1991). The latter puts forward the implausible argument that three factors have ensured "continued development" in Botswana. The first of these is what Hill claims to be the aversion to excessive increases in Government expenditure during the boom period. The second argument is that the accumulation of huge international reserves has also spurred on development. Unfortunately it is not clear at all how this happened and whether there is any correlation between internal development and sustained accumulation of international reserves. As a matter of fact the management of foreign reserves liquidity by the BDP Government and the attendant implications for internal development is a strongly contested issue (9). Finally, Hill avers that Government balances at the Bank of Botswana were also "critical" for development.

However, having dispassionately discussed the technical and administrative aspects of the macroeconomic regime that prevailed since the encashment of mineral resources in 1969, Hill fails to address the more pertinent question of how the BDP Government has utilised excess

revenue for purposes of development in order to broaden the beneficiaries. More often than not economists tend to forget that development is about people.

In a way Botswana is fortunate in that while adjustment processes in contemporary Africa, and much of the Third World, have been carried out mostly in response to disastrous political and economic woes like balance of payment deficits, loss of markets, chronic indebtedness, poor export earnings, drought and famine plus a host of other such crises, adjustment in Botswana has consistently been in response to accumulated mineral wealth which has made the economy extremely liquid in the last two and a half decades. But what have been the consequences of New Wealth for the country in terms of absorption capacity and social differentiation?

Our argument is that direct foreign investment in Botswana created a dependent economy, with a dynamic internal enclave structure, which has not only dramatically reshaped the composition of the country's leading classes, but also proved incapable of directing the path of development towards the rural sector. The irony about the political economy of development in Botswana is that the very state, which against all odds, brokered what is considered the best deal with leading multinational corporations has over the years proved incapable of using the same skills and determination in spreading the benefits of mining reserves to the rural poor (10). This indeed is a terrible commentary on a country still considered by many as a model of success.

(b) The State and the Pseudo-Corporatist Crusade

The social structures that have evolved in the last thirty years have resiliently remained inimical to the envisaged trajectory of rural development. The ruling coalition that emerged in the wake of liberation politics and subsequent attainment of formal independence, what Adam Kuper (1970) called the "New Men", was originally administratively united on the developmental prospects available to the country. This political sentiment was common to many newly independent African countries in the 1960s (Shrestha, 1986). Unfortunately, this unanimity of purpose has historically proved to be merely ephemeral and a relic of the more tenacious preceding nationalist imperative for unity in the fight against colonialism (Mkandawire, 1988).

But in Botswana this administrative unity was more a reflection of serious apprehensions and political uncertainties about the future as the country was dismally poor. The mineral revolution of the 1970s, however, turned the fortunes of the country around. The encashment of mineral resources soon inspired a glimmer of hope and the ruling political elite, arguing along a vein that was very much informed by theorists like Gerschenkron and mainstream development economics, started emphasising the active role of the state as imperative for a backward economy like Botswana. The inescapable result was the concentration of the capital process in

state institutions as illustrated above. The BDP Government unambiguously committed itself to state-led developmental strategies (Charlton, 1991). Although not a single party state in a legal sense, there were fears within the political leadership that political forces inimical to the envisaged path of development might emerge.

Consequently, the BDP set out to consolidate political power by employing subtle but effective exclusionary measures with such success that one social scientist observed that the country was a de facto single party dictatorship by the late 1970s (Stephens and Speed, 1977 and Wiseman, 1977). First, constitutional changes were enunciated to ensure that the national Government, habitually called the central Government in Botswana, takes precedence over tribal Governments; a process of devolution of powers discussed in Chapter 2. Second, complex legal instruments were established to vest all mineral rights in the central Government, thus providing safeguards for the evolution of an economic hegemony compatible with the political ascendancy of the modern petty bourgeoisie ruling coalition (Thapelo, 1992). Finally, a single-minded economic policy was adopted to concentrate investments in the mining industry with the vote catcher ideological proviso that financial returns would be reinvested in the rural economy; something that still has to take place as the empirical data at the end of this chapter and also in the next two chapters indicate.

The BDP Government, although preaching the sanctity of private property and individual accumulation, has surprisingly excluded individual investment in the state parastatals. The latter accounted for an estimated 80% of the country's total recorded foreign trade between 1975 and 1984 (World Bank, 1985). The only exception to this aversion to private investment in the parastatals was the allowance made in 1984 to permit the BDC to launch Sechaba Investment Trust (SIT) which subsequently purchased P5.8 million worth of shares held by the same parastatal in nine different companies in exchange for 1,116 954 Trust shares which went to the BDC. The latter then proceeded to offer 40,000 of the Trust shares to the public (Mukandala, 1992).

At a superficial political level the multi-partyist BDP deliberately permitted ethnic politics to flourish as exemplified by the fact that all local Government structures are predicated upon distinctive political units or districts (MacCartney, 1978; Holm, 1972; 1987, Picard, 1979a, 1979b, and Egner, 1978). In a stimulating exposition of the exigencies of state and development in the less developed countries, the U.S.A. political scientist, Huntington (1968), emphasised the developmental importance of concentrating political power in the hands of a bureaucratic polity. Bureaucratic polity is defined as:

the political system in which power and participation in national decisions are limited almost entirely to the employees of the state, particularly the officer corps and the highest level of the bureaucracy,

including especially the highly trained specialists known as the technocrats (Jackson, 1978, p. 3).

Huntington argued that for the bureaucratic polity to achieve its developmental objectives, it would have to undertake the political destruction of those social forces, interests, customs and institutions that held back development through their continued opposition to the modernisation agenda.

Political elites in Botswana, however, did not undertake to overhaul traditional institutions overnight, choosing instead to incorporate them slowly but gradually in addition to the other array of economic and class interests emerging with mineral economic growth and the expansion of livestock production. Holm (1987) has described this strand of state-society relations as bearing all the hallmarks of "paternalistic democracy". This thesis seeks to demonstrate that the political regime that prevailed in the country over the last three decades was actually a "quasi-corporatist type".

Whilst taming the political passions and economic interests of workers and the rural peasantry the regime simultaneously promoted the incorporation of favoured groups in decision making processes (Thapelo, 1993). These groups, covering large cattle producers, multinational corporations, senior state civil servants and the various members of the liberal professions, represented economic producers and providers of public services. They enjoyed privileged access to a bargaining process over public policies and institutionalised administrative unity. For instance, the 1974 amendment to the Trade Union Act stipulates that in no trade or industry shall administrative professionals in higher echelons, that is, super grade administrative and managerial positions, become members of the same trade union(s) as the low ranking staff in the same trades, industry or occupation (Parson, 1980).

This piece of legislation did not apply to economic producers who were allowed to continue relying on collective bargaining. Thus, whilst affirming the unity of capital, the BDP Government continued to impose legal disabilities that promoted working class fragmentation and polarisation. The major difference with Botswana is that, unlike in real corporatist states, the favoured groups did not have to guarantee the legal compliance of their members or associates to Government policies in exchange for their privileged positions. Besides, in the majority of cases, these groups were not united in any organisational structures (Gossett, 1985). In Chapters 5 and 6 we provide an analysis of how this aspect of Government policy, by virtue of its discriminatory inclination to capital and those associated with it, impacted upon various marginalised minority communities.

4.7 Rural Development as Policy and Process

(a) Distribution Inequalities

The economics of income distribution, especially in developing countries where inequalities can be critical for both economic development and maintenance of the polity, is a strongly debated subject. An International Labour Office (ILO) study of this subject concluded that:

However great may have been the growth of a country's gross national product, that country cannot be said to have made progress if the bulk of the population has remained at the same level of income (Germidis et al, 1984, p. 2).

A substantial amount of literature exists on income distribution and inequalities in Botswana (11). However, most of these works place emphasis on the quantitative aspects of these phenomena and then proceed to ignore both the qualitative and socio-political implications for sustained rural development. The 1974-75 Rural Income Distribution Survey (RIDS) and the 1985-86 Household Income Expenditure Survey (HIES) brought to light the glaring inequalities that continue to haunt Botswana. The following tables are important for our analysis.

TABLE 1: MEAN MONTHLY RURAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME FOR 1974-75 AND 1985-86 (PULA PER MONTH AT 1985-86 PRICE)

	1974-75	1985-86
Mean Household Income		
Cash Income	173	136
Non-cash Income	120	83
All Income	293	219

Source: RoB (1975b and 1988).

TABLE 2: MEASURES OF RURAL INCOME DISTRIBUTION FOR TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME 1974-75 AND 1985-86

	RIDS 1974-1975	HIES 1985-1986
Gini coefficient	0.52*	0.48 + (0.56)++
Percentage of Income accruing to bottom 40%	12	12 (11)
Percentage of income accruing to middle 40%	30	32 (28)
Percentage of income accruing to top 20%	58	56 (61)

Source: RoB (1975b and 1988)

- * For rural households
- + For people living in rural households
- ++ Brackets indicate national distribution figures

TABLE 3: RURAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY SOURCE OF TOTAL INCOME 1974-75 AND 1985-86 (Percentages)

Source	1974-75	1985-86
Wage employment	21.5	34.5
Livestock farming	35.0	20.2
Crop farming	10.8	3.2
Other activities ++	18.5	13.4.
Private transfers (remittances)	14.2	28.8
Public transfers	-	4.9

Source: Valentine (1993a)

++ Largely self-employed income from beer brewing, hunting, gathering, trading, services, basket weaving, pottery, building, carpentry etc.

Table 1 shows that the income level for rural households as a whole experienced a decline from 1975 to 1986. Both cash income and non-cash income suffered a diminished role as sources of household income. It is clear, however, that by 1986 rural households were worse off than was the case in 1975.

Table 2 indicates that whilst the lowest 40% of the rural households earned 12% of the national income in the same period, the top percentile (20%) got 58%. The condition of the bottom 40%

remained unchanged and actually declined at a national level (see 11% in brackets). The middle group conversely improved while the top few still enjoyed 61% of the national cake. Table 3 indicates that whereas 35% of rural household income depended on livestock farming, this had been reduced to 20% by 1986 - a consequence of the concentration of cattle into the hands of cattle barons as a result of the pastoral reforms discussed in chapter 3 of this thesis.

It has been argued that the major gap between the rich and the poor in Botswana is not between the managerial elite class and the proletariat (Molutsi, 1988). The wealth gap is, according to this argument, between the proletariat and the rural peasantry. This argument however is flawed specifically because it assumes a class orientation that albeit theoretically tenable offers nothing practical for the case of Botswana. To start with both "proletariat" and "the peasantry" are notoriously difficult to define and conceptualise within the Botswana context (12). For instance, in late 1990, the Permanent Secretary to the President earned P113,380 per annum, the starting wage of an industrial (floor) worker was P2,844 per annum, a differential of 39.9:1 (Good, 1993). A small cattle holder could at the same period exchange one beast for at least sixteen bags of grain; enough to feed a family for a year (Arntzen, 1990). Now who is better off between the small farmer and the urban worker?

A more useful approach is to discard this homogenised perspective of social groups and concentrate on the politics of conflict and collaboration in the face of unrelenting stratified distribution of the benefits of growth. We start from the assumption that politics of conflict and collaboration are manifest at three levels; viz, the "class" (or collective level), the communal (or ethnic level) and the individual level. In most cases there is considerable overlap between these three levels and where this happens it is only proper to avoid undue reliance on "class analysis". The need for this approach is well illustrated in the next Chapter. To understand the nature of distribution inequalities and social stratification in Botswana, however, it is pertinent that we first develop a historical perspective that puts the national picture into context.

(b) Livestock Industry, Population and Drought

There are certain critical issues in the interpretation of the political economy of rural development in Botswana. The first, and perhaps most crucial, is the pervasive influence of state policies. This issue is the subject of chapter 3 of this thesis. The second is the question of land use and surface water distribution both of which have been historically prominent determinants of the distribution of both people and animals (Mannathoko, 1992). In the recent past, however, there are several secular trends that have adversely affected the rural economy. These are

- a) rapid population growth;
- b) population structure;
- c) unequal access to the limited employment opportunities;
- d) dramatic increase in the size of the national herd; and
- e) the incidence of recurrent drought.

It is estimated that about 76 percent of Botswana's 1.3 million people live in the rural areas and that their most important economic activity is agriculture (*ibid.*). Conservative estimates put the number of farming households in 1992 at 85,000. The number of livestock farming households was about 70,000 in 1992 (see White, 1992, pp, 38-39, Table 2). Fifty five thousand of the latter households were cattle farming households. Sixty seven percent were headed by men while 23% were female-headed. Sixty three percent of cattle were owned by households with fewer than 150 cattle, and the remaining percentage of cattle were owned by households with more than 150 cattle.

Consider the following table.

TABLE 4: LIVESTOCK POPULATION, 1979 TO 1990 (THOUSANDS)

Year	Cattle	Goats	Sheep	Donkeys	Horses	Chicken	Pigs
1979	2,840	616	152	127	18	740	6
1980	2,911	638	149	130	22	833	6
1981	2,967	621	140	127	24	1,046	5
1982	2,979	636	140	138	24	1,146	5
1983	2,818	783	165	142	23	961	5
1984	2,685	889	167	139	23	714	7
1985	2,459	1,138	200	146	23	1,020	9
1986	2,332	1,332	229	142	24	1,179	11
1987	2,264	1,470	240	147	24	1,283	11
1988	2,408	1,691	259	150	28	1,810	13
1989	2,549	1,897	286	151	32	2,013	15
1990	2,696	2,092	317	158	34	2,126	16

Source: Kalahari Conservation Society (1992, p. 22)

Statistical data from the Ministry of Agriculture indicate that the rural population increased from 770,000 people in 1981 to 1,009,000 people in 1991 (*ibid.*). Over the same period the number of households holding cattle declined from 57,700 to 50,300. The number of households with 21 cattle declined from 29,800 in the same period to 23,500. Since the size of the national herd was only about 5% less than in 1981 this decline must be attributed to a sharp increase in the skew of the distribution of ownership and not the 1982-1987 drought spell as some studies claim (Valentine, 1993a).

Our contention is that the decline in the economic status of the bulk of the rural population is not a consequence of drought and other related natural disasters, but reflects a long-term trend which is often only exacerbated by drought. The two phenomena, viz, state interventionism and drought, may occasionally have reinforced each other in fostering social differentiation but the historical reality is that drought is hardly a long-term determinant of social change in Botswana. The next chapter addresses this issue in more detail.

In 1875 Chief Khama III of the Bangwato possessed an estimated 8,000 cattle and had an annual income of some £3,000 (Good, 1993). Even though the rinderpest epidemic of 1895 decimated 95% of the Tswana cattle, Tshekedi Khama who boasted that he "inherited all Khama's cattle and... the area in which they were run", amassed 50,000 cattle in the mid-1920s (Wylie, 1990). When Tshekedi Khama went into exile at Rametsana in the late 1940s, his followers brought with them between 25,000 and 30,000 cattle. While such accumulation by the tribal leaders occurred, with some rulers receiving £3,500 to £7,000 annual incomes from their participation in the collection of colonial taxation, the lot of the poor have worsened. Isaac Schapera observed in the 1940s that 10 percent of households had no cattle. This figure was up to 29% in the 1970s and had reached 45% by 1980. In 1992 the proportion of agricultural households without cattle was 39% (Good, 1993).

Thus, it is pretty clear that inequalities in Botswana display strong continuities between the pre-colonial, colonial and the post-independence period. For instance, rural investment remained virtually stagnant between 1966 and 1973. Investment in the rural economy experienced a dramatic decline of 5% of the capital budget during the 1972/1973 financial year (Colclough and Fallon 1983). Government policy after independence was so insensitive to the needs of the rural communities that a "conscious" policy was adopted to ignore rural development altogether and concentrate development efforts on mining and urbanisation (Picard, 1987 and Shrestha, 1986). As Gulhati (1990a and 1990b) rightly concludes this policy worked primarily because "political commitment was weak" in the rural sector of the economy.

4.8 Bates' Rational Choice Perspective and Rural Change

Bates' argument, in the text mentioned at the beginning of this Chapter, is based on three thematic premises. The first argument is that African governments adopt policies that have harmful consequences for the majority of rural agricultural producers. Second, these policies are determined by political considerations on the part of governments bent on perpetuating their hold on power. Finally, the primary social objectives of such pervasive policies are such that governments are compelled to extract revenue from the rural economy so that they can meet the demands of state-led industrialisation and, among other things, earn foreign exchange. Governments are also concerned with lowering food prices in urban areas so that they can tame the political passions and ambitions of various politically powerful interest groups.

According to Bates, political processes in Africa are primarily manifest in the sphere of the market. The role of the market is crucial at the three levels, viz; the market for the factors of production, the market for rural agricultural produce and the market for urban manufactured consumer goods. Governments manipulate prices at all market levels so that they can promote the extraction and channelling of surplus from the rural to the urban areas. The result is that the peasantry is eventually

... compelled to surrender its resources to the upper classes, to the state, and to the industrial sector (Bates, 1981, p.7)

At the beginning of this Chapter we mentioned certain concerns raised by two Botswana politicians and a Zimbabwean businessman concerning Botswana's post-independence developmental model. The overriding concern is what they perceive to be a rural-orientated developmental trajectory that promote a "cattlepost mentality" hostile to the urbanisation and, by and large, inimical to the ethics and demands of modern industrial society. This perception contradicts Bates' depiction of post-colonial African society.

But it must be pointed out that the difference between Botswana and other African countries is one of degree and not kind. In the case of Botswana it was not rural agricultural policies *per se* that determined the course of rural development and change. The nature of the evolution of the state sector also played a crucial role. However, the centrality of politics to the formation and execution of agricultural policies in Botswana is as evident in our analysis as it is in the Bates thesis. The political and social purposes of such behaviour are not, however, as clearcut as Bates suggests. The quest for rapid state-led industrialisation is not clearly evident in Botswana. What emerges is a single quest for hegemonic control and the theatre of politics is located in the rural sector.

There are also neither concerns with lowering urban food prices nor efforts to appease urbanites confronted with "financial retrenchment". As the next Chapter illustrates, the Botswana ruling coalition is concerned with depoliticising the rural electorate through the pervasive use of pseudo-welfarist schemes. In fact certain factors, partially, impose some limits to the Bates perspective with respect to the political economy of rural transformation in Botswana. First, the cattle-based nature of the rural economy, coupled with excessive subsidisation and privileged access to the European Union, through the Beef Protocol of the Lome Convention, makes it difficult for the "development coalition", which in any case has strong ties and historical roots in the rural sector, to manipulate markets in such a way that rural communities suffer alone.

However, the market for the factors of production, especially land and capital, are evidently being used for covert political purposes. But although a disproportionate majority of rural dwellers suffer from this, it is not easy to solely apportion the blame to the state and ignore natural visitations like drought. The reductionist underpinnings of the Bates rational choice paradigm are open to criticism. It has, particularly, been argued that the basic problem with Bates' analysis rests with the assumption that it is possible to "unambiguously separate economically rational and politically rational courses of action" (Berry, 1993b, p.1056). The striking paradox with the Botswana experience is that poverty exists in the rural economy and its magnitude, albeit largely unknown, is thought to be unacceptably high as argued in thesis. But despite the fact that the ruling coalition has manifestly been unwilling or unable to invest appropriately and continually in the rural sector, that is promoting economically productive ventures in the sector, it still draws the majority of its support from the rural dwellers (see the next two Chapters). Thus rural agricultural policies in Botswana are much more fractious and unpredictable and therefore do not easily lend themselves to reductionist analysis.

The latter observation is no way more evident than in the case of Bakgalagadi. The latter are an ethnic group of people who live in or around the Kalahari desert. They are Bantu-Speakers and linguistically distinct from the San. Historically, they were dominated by Tswana tribes but benefited from the imposition of *Pax Britannica* in 1885. Colonial rule weakened the economic restrictions that had previously been imposed on them by their Tswana counterparts (Solway, 1994a and 1994b). By the 1970s property accumulation among these people was such that they had already adopted views and values associated with modern commerce. Even today, some of them are well known politicians. But still dominant Tswana groups still seek to undermine them by appealing to their history of "servitude" (*ibid.*). Chapters 5 and 6 indicate how non-economic factors like ethnicity, culture and geographical location can influence the course of rural change among rural communities. They also indicate that such communities can, and often do, extricate themselves from the web of state interventionism.

4.9 Conclusion

Social inequalities and stratification in Botswana are sanctioned by both history and state policy. Individual accumulation has always enjoyed supremacy in the country but it is structurally and ideologically determined by non-economic factors like tribalism, social class and state policy. It is these same factors that continued to influence the path of rural development in the post-colonial period up to the 1990s. The Botswana political elite, united by a common tradition of livestock ownership and ethos, has failed to remove those socio-economic, political and cultural factors that stand in the way of sustained rural development.

But events of the 1980s point to a changed outlook with respect to both the radicalisation of state policies and the weakening of political acquiescence. It is in the light of the latter development that the next two chapters seek to address the question of peasant consciousness and its response to unjust Government policies.

CHAPTER FIVE

AGRO-PASTORAL REFORMS AND THE SAN : A CASE STUDY

5.1 Introduction

This analysis considers the nature of agrarian transition in Botswana and the manner in which the interplay between the historical experiences of various social groups and forces of nature has culminated in the evolution of modes of domination that continue to characterise power relations and social transformation today. Historical experiences, and the corresponding interpretations at specific periods, on the one hand, and forces of nature like drought and surface-water, on the other, are major "traditional" determinants of social differentiation in Botswana (1). But since the formal attainment of political independence in 1966, state bureaucratic domination has eclipsed the former in carrying out the process of social transformation. The rapid expansion of the state, and the aggressive political penetration into the rural sector, has produced asymmetric relations of production and serious social inequalities (see previous chapter). Our analysis, drawing on electoral experience, indicates that in the 1990s the public, especially (but not exclusively) the San, has started reacting to the state's massive penetration of their lives by attempting to influence the policy process.

Massive social transformations engineered from above, especially with regard to the commercialisation of agro-pastoralism, have not only altered the distribution of power, but also produced distinctive and (historically) embedded modes of (i) capitalist penetration; (ii) class formation; and (iii) a particular dynamic of rural differentiation predicated on ethnicity, discrimination and socio-spatial distribution. The result is the current growing resentment which, in spite of increasing insensitivity of leading politicians, as exemplified by the element of menace that now permeates official discourse, has the potential to destroy the modern polity, and the three decade hold on power by the BDP.

(a) The Argument

This chapter is organised into four sections. First, there is a presentation of the major argument in the context of converging bodies of theoretical work in general and around Botswana in particular. The second section addresses the historical roots of the problem and demonstrates how the post-colonial state inherited and, consequently, legitimised stratified modes of distribution and accumulation. Thirdly, we examine how the post-colonial process of rapid social change, tied to an expanding economy and an activist state bureaucracy, resulted in small San communities being relegated to second class status. Finally, we consider San response to the pervasive presence of the state in the rural economy and the political implications for the future.

5.2 Participation and Development: Some Theoretical Issues

The previous three chapters have placed considerable emphasis on the importance of citizen participation in the development process. The analyses have produced evidence for the absence of sustainable rural development in Botswana. It also points out the absence of effective participation by the peasantry in the development process. Specifically, we attribute the prevalence of rural underdevelopment since 1966 to the absence of an alternative to the bureaucratic rigidity of the state (see Chapters 3 & 4). The argument is that there is a need for the evolution of alternative rural institutions capable of facilitating peasant participation in national development and the promotion of social welfare.

These interpretations of peasant participation and rural underdevelopment in Botswana, however, raise conceptual and empirical questions that call for deeper analysis. There are three critical questions that particularly deserve attention. First, what is participation? Second, is participation necessary for development? Finally, who should lead development? We need to address these critical questions within the context of Botswana before we can clearly establish where the responsibility for the welfare of the nation's people rest.

Theoretically, there is no universal definition of political participation. However, some development theorists and practitioners readily associate peasant participation with the writings of the social scientist Illich (1971), whose argument is that peasant participation can only occur where there is de-professionalisation in all domains of life; e.g, national development planning, schooling, health care, transportation etc (Goulet, 1989). According to this school of thought, de-professionalisation makes "ordinary people" responsible for their own well-being. This perspective thus affirms the superior value of popular participation over elite decision making.

Its normative nature accords well with Freire's (1973) doctrine which has been succinctly summarised thus:

the supreme cornerstone of development is whether people who were previously treated as mere objects, known and acted upon, can now actively know and act upon, thereby becoming subjects of their own social destiny (Goulet, 1989, p. 165).

In other words, participation allows oppressed people to become active subjects of knowledge and action. When this happens, according to the de-professionalisation school of thought, the oppressed people, hitherto bound to a culture of silence, "begin to construct their proper human history and engage in processes of authentic development" (*ibid.*).

The de-professionalisation perspective evolved as an analytical framework designed to address the plight of the poor in both the colonial and the immediate post-colonial period (Illich 1976; Freire 1973). The problems of poverty in the Third World, however, have since become more complex as dynamic processes of development in the 1980s and the early 1990s clashed head-on with growing intra-national forces of social differentiation marked by intense class struggles, ethnicity and cultural discrimination, inter alia. In the 1990s we find that the poor are in effect "part society" and rarely synonymous with a given national polity. This is particularly the case in Botswana and other African nation states as our analysis will demonstrate.

It is against this background that development specialists and practitioners now call for more practical and operational, as opposed to abstract, definitions of participation. But the broad outlines of the de-professionalisation framework still have strong merits and possibly applicable ideas as subsequent analysis with respect to Botswana illustrates. For our purposes here, and given the major thrust of our argument in the previous three chapters, an appropriate working definition of participation is the one adopted by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) which contends that participation designates

...[the] organised efforts to increase control over resources and regulative institutions in given social situations, on the part of groups and movements hitherto excluded from such control (Wolfe, 1983, p. 2).

In short, participation is not only about participatory democracy, that is a political regime that allows a large segment of the population to take a direct and active part in Government or the formation of public policy (Raymond, 1978), but it also designates the conferment of citizenship. The concept of citizenship as used in this context, is discussed in Chapter 3 of this thesis where we contend that the three spheres of citizenship, the civil, the political and the socio-economic spheres are central to any discussion of human welfare.

In terms of entitlement theory, participation essentially denotes citizens' ability to enjoy the four entitlement relations delineated by Sen (1981, pp. 1-7) and widely accepted in a private ownership market economy. These are:

- i) trade-based entitlement: where an individual is entitled to own what they obtain by trading their own produce with a willing party or multilaterally with a willing set of parties;
- ii) production-based entitlement: an individual is entitled to own what they get by arranging production using their own resources or resources hired from willing parties meeting the agreed conditions of trade;

- iii) own labour entitlement: one is entitled to one's own labour power, and thus to the trade-based and production-based entitlements related to one's own labour power; and
- iv) inheritance and transfer entitlement: where an individual is entitled to own what is willingly given to them by any agent who legitimately owns what is thus bequeathed

It should, however, be emphasised that participation is not a mere economic phenomena, it is also a political phenomenon. Whether discussed as a goal or a means for arriving at more optimal economic outcomes, participation has as its central feature, the aspect of originating aspect hence the question of who should lead development. Three distinct sources of participation are evident in Third World rural development (Goulet, 1989 and Bratton, 1989).

- i) Participation can be induced from above by some authority or expert; usually the state.
- ii) Participation can be spontaneously generated from below usually during a crisis or perceived communal threat.
- iii) Participation can arise as a catalytic action of third party change agents, for example, missionaries, non-Governmental organisations, militant political movements and general development practitioners.

Peasant economic participation, as distinct from political participation (note that these phenomena often dovetail and reinforce each other), is a problematic issue. This is all the more so in the LDCs where the concept of a peasantry is often very fluid. There are raging debates about the "peasant concept" in Botswana and the Third World in general (Scott, 1976 and 1985; Lipton, 1968; Harriss, 1982 and Ellis, 1988). Central to this debate is the concept of the peasantry. Is the category of the "peasant economy" in the LDC a useful one? Are rural economies based on "households" units of production as mainstream economics claim? Is the peasantry in the LDCs a class? What is the political role of peasants in the post-colonial states? This debate on the concept of peasants in Botswana remains unresolved (Molutsi, 1986 and Tsie, 1995 and 1996b).

Such questions are often thrown about without due regard to their theoretical implications. Within the structural/historical approach to peasant studies there is a strong debate between what may be broadly characterised as (i) the "differentiation perspective" and (ii) the notion of a "specific peasant economy" on the other (Harriss, 1982, p. 24). Structural/historical studies contend that with increasing commoditisation and commercialisation in agrarian societies a process is set in motion which leads to the evolution of distinct social groups, usually called classes, over time. Proponents of a specific peasant economy generally characterise peasants as "part society" and usually emphasise their subordinate relationships to external agents like the

state, markets and the dominant culture. However, in practice, as we shall see, the line between these perspectives is very thin.

In this thesis we contend that conceptually, it is illogical to refer to peasants as a class. Peasant society is more often than not heterogeneous due to ethnic, customary, religious, age, sex, political and economic differences as is the case in the historical context of Botswana for example (see Chapters 2). Our analysis here will also illustrate that peasants are not always risk-averse. They also appreciate the efficacy of economic rationality and efficiency. The argument that peasants do not optimise profits will be shown not always to be true; especially with respect to the communities discussed in this chapter.

5.3 The Historical Nature of Tswana Social Relations

Academic studies of the interaction between agro-pastoral and foraging populations in Botswana are basically dominated by two traditions. First, there is the isolationist/evolutionist model which contends that Kgalagari-San people historically existed in a world of pristine isolation from the rest of the Tswana communities (Motzafi-Haller, 1994). This perspective gained popularity in the 1950s largely due to the work carried out by the Harvard Kalahari Project and their associates. Some of these scholars like Richard Lee and Irene Devore actually believed that "early man" still existed in the Kalahari in the 1960s. The San were depicted as "unusually isolated and traditionally oriented" (Good, 1993, p. 211). One of the members of this school of thought argued that the "San traditional way of life" was "strongly" opposed to the "accumulation of property and wealth" (Guenther, 1976, p. 131 and 1986).

The Harvard Kalahari team found "not poverty and loss", among the San in the 1960s, "but a continuing communality, peace and justice": a "truly communal" and a remarkable "sharing way of life" was thought to be in actual practice unchanging and unchanged over long periods of time (Good, 1993). This theoretical assumption of an egalitarian community living in a "state of nature" and at peace with itself fitted well with the evolutionary and ecological models of the 1950s and 1960s. However, studies later indicated that this conception, wittingly or otherwise, helped to legitimise Kalahari-San propertylessness by romantically emphasising their aboriginality.

By the 1970s this theoretical perspective came under particularly intense scrutiny and criticism from social science that recognised the historical vacuity in the isolationist models. New theoretical models emerged from a swelling body of archaeological, historical and ethnographic work that challenged the assumptions of orthodox anthropology. These studies focused on the examination of contact situations among the Kalahari-San, Tswana-speaking ethnic groups and Europeans (Hitchcock, 1982). What emerged was a historical-interactive model which

demonstrates how connections between forces of capitalist penetration led to the emergence of historically specific socio-cultural formations in modern Botswana.

Based on models of political economy developed in the 1980s, the historical-interactive perspective sought to illustrate how the ahistorical nature of the isolationist-evolutionist models played into the hands of Tswana elite who found an ideological justification in the myth of San aboriginality. The thrust of this argument is nowhere more emphasised than in the assertion that it provided:

... the basis for an effective tradition which might disguise the dispossession and dehumanisation wrought upon the San by Tswana elites... Coupled with policies stressing intensified commercial cattle production, the manufactured tradition could become part of a fairly cohesive development whole, which ignored the past and minimised the present in favour of moving forward. The Basarwa (sic) could be kept in their place, and the tradition might gain in support, legitimacy, and strength (Good, 1993, p. 211).

(a) Historical Background

The association of Kalahari-San people with the "bush" is rooted in history and not, as the Tswana-speaking groups suggest, in their nature (Solway, 1994b). The myth of a pristine, leaderless, propertyless and lawless San living in "continuing communality" actually obscures long-standing historical differentiation processes.

Wilmsen (1990) demonstrate how the Khoisan people developed and controlled the means of production and trade over large parts of the Kalahari centuries before their contact with Tswana-speaking people. At the beginning of the present millennium, these people were shown not only to have been engaged in long distance trade but they also had been long engaged in the production of ceramics. Archaeological excavation has identified a number of agro-pastoral sites in the Kalahari dating from AD 700.

European travellers like Burchell (1822) and Livingstone (1857) provided eye-witness accounts of San cattle-keeping. Wilmsen (1989a) even provides a convincing argument that Khoisan speaking people were the first pastoralists in Botswana. It has been established that these people were hierarchically ranked and that they had their own independent, and often powerful, chiefs.

The analysis above begs the critical question; how did the Kalahari San come to be a dispossessed community dependent on the magnanimity of their Tswana-speaking and European counterparts in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries? This question is not easy to answer. However historical sources point to a parallelism that can hardly be incidental. It has

been established that a rising Tswana elite gained in wealth and power at a time when the Kalahari San suffered increasing deprivation of property and political autonomy (Good 1993, Solway, 1994b, Motzafi-Haller, 1994). It is therefore possible that San deprivation can be attributed to Tswana accumulation: a theme to which we shall return later in this chapter.

(b) Tswana Elite Domination and the San

Diana Wylie (1990) argues that structural inequality was the core concept in the Tswana political realm of the previous century symbolised, she says, by the proverbial expression that "no man was another's equal" (*batho ga re lekane re se meno*). The interdependence between political power and economic wealth was illustrated by the prevalent usage of the term "Kgosi" for both a chief and a rich man. Thus acceptance and legitimisation of social divisions had firm ideological formations. She argues that;

... soon after Tswana cattlemen had appropriated springs in the Kalahari, the Sarwa who had formerly used those scarce water points found their labour, first as hunters appropriated by the cattlemen as well (Wylie, 1990, p. 84).

San dispossession took different forms. Earlier studies contended that San engagement in long-distance trade was disrupted by the advent of intrusive Portuguese traders around the Indian Ocean and Angola. This approach, however, should be rejected on the theoretical basis that, besides granting too powerful a role to external forces in the exploitation of the Kalahari San and thus rendering them somewhat passive in the face of capitalist penetration, it also assumes that trade and exchange between various social groups necessarily entail domination. We have shown in the previous sections of this thesis that this was not the case.

In this chapter we seek to analyze political domination not only in terms of economic exploitation but also in everyday practices and dominant discourses. A careful analysis of patterns of participation in, or exclusion from, social institutions, the dominant social discourse and political economy in general, is central to our understanding of a particular dynamic of rural differentiation that obtains mostly in north western Botswana today.

(c) Colonial Antecedents to Post-Colonial Bureaucratic Domination

Historical sources indicate that contacts between the Khoisan and Bantu-speaking groups go back some 2000 years (Hitchcock and Holm, 1993). In the previous two and three centuries a series of agro-pastoral Tswana-speaking kingdoms and chieftains emerged in the present day Botswana (Tlou, 1972, 1984 and Tlou and Cambell, 1984). Tswana imperial expansion, like that of the Zulu under Shaka, was typically characterised by incessant incorporation of ethnic groups other than Tswana although conflicts among various Tswana polities were also common. Through these wars of conquest, non-Tswana peoples, like the Kalanga in the north east, the

Bayei in the north west, and Bakgalagadi in the central Kgalagadi district were turned into tributary states. Subject groups enjoyed limited civil and political rights within their domain but they were constantly exposed to the brutality of Tswana sub-imperialism, especially during the colonial period.

However, the San were fully incorporated in Tswana society and, as illustrated in Chapter 2, subjected to conditions bordering on slavery. Towards the turn of the nineteenth century an emerging Tswana political elite imbued with Christian values and slightly informed about the spirit and the culture of enlightenment that swept over Europe and other parts of the world, subsequent to both the French and American revolution in the eighteenth century, began campaigning for a betterment of the lot of the Khoisan as an economic and social underclass. Chief Khama III of the Bangwato, then the largest Tswana-speaking group, is credited for having been the first enlightened Tswana despot to enforce an ordinance compelling cattle-owners to provide cattle to their Khoisan employees for their labour (Schapera, 1947 and Parson, 1980). Schapera actually records that Khama III abolished the payment of tribute by the Khoisan in 1911.

These legal reforms were not effective at all. Tshekedi Khama, who succeeded Khama III as Regent in 1923, boasted that after acquiring an estimated 50,000 cattle "he inherited all Khama's cattle and thus the area in which they were run" and most of those lands belonged to the Khoisan (Good, 1993). As a result of this massive land alienation, serf ownership flourished in the 1930s and, among the handful of royals in whom wealth was concentrated, Tshekedi Khama was the largest serf owner and some 3,000 San were his personal property (Crowther and Miers, 1988).

In the aftermath of a prolonged and bitter feud within the Ngwato chieftaincy in 1926, Simon Ratshosa, who is still regarded by some historians as the first Tswana nationalist, in a statement in evidence against Tshekedi Khama's "enlightened dictatorship" stated that;

... the Masarwa are slaves. They can be killed. It is no crime... If they run away their masters can bring them back and do what they like in the way of punishment. They are never paid. If the Masarwa live in the veld and I want any to work for me, I go and take any I want (*ibid.*, p. 172).

Be that as it may, the injustices perpetrated by Tswana elites against the objects of their exploitation and disdain, did not go unnoticed by the colonial administration and the international community. Ruthless Tswana domination over the Khoisan and the intensity of bureaucratic encroachment into Khoisan lives by both Batswana and European settlers resulted in allegations of Khoisan slavery by the League of Nations in the 1920s (Hermans, 1978). This foreign intervention was part of the growing concern in the international sphere about the plight of "aborigines" in Bechuanaland Protectorate which started around the turn of the last century.

On its part, the colonial administration's policy preoccupation with the so-called "Bushmen problem" was to provide an institutional framework capable of freeing the Khoisan from their bondage. One of the most ambitious undertakings initiated by the colonial administration to achieve this goal came about as a result of the Silberbauer Commission of 1965. After his appointment to the position of Bushmen Survey Officer in 1958, Silberbauer carried out an investigation into the plight of the Khoisan and, in line with previous such investigations like the Simon Ratshosa Report (1926), the Tagart Commission (1933) the Joyce Commission (1938) and the Schapera Report (1939), came up with a series of recommendations. Some social scientists have pointed out that these investigations, by and large, were essentially futile exercises. In a scathing attack on "problem solving by commissioner of inquiry" it has been argued that:

both the colonial and post-independence regimes have had to deal with the so-called Bushmen problem. Each Government has responded with a formal investigation which inevitably proposes remedial programmes. In spite of the rhetoric of local participation the resulting programmes are essentially the transfer of the San from their previous conditions of economic servitude to various forms of dependence on, and control by, the Government or the exchange of one form of domination for another (Hitchcock and Holm, 1993, p. 315).

Silberbauer, however sought a more practical solution. The most important recommendation by the Silberbauer Commission was the establishment of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, covering some nine percent of the country, as the home to the Khoisan. It was argued that the protection of the Khoisan, and the internally cherished fauna and flora of the Kalahari desert within this sanctuary, would attract powerful support and defence by international environmentalists and human rights groups. The reaction of the Tswana populace was, however, not considered and, as we shall see later, this omission was to prove the Achilles heel on the Silberbauer strategy. Meanwhile the plan to establish this sanctuary for the Khoisan materialised, and the latter, who by the 1950s had been reduced to a foraging mode of existence, were allowed to hunt and gather as long as they used rudimentary tools like bows and arrows.

5.4 Tswana Discourse and the Spatial Distribution and Domination of the Khoisan

The question of San settlements and population in Botswana is compounded by a number of factors. However, in my view, four of these stand out and need to be delineated and analyzed in depth. These are:

- (i) San population and settlement patterns,
- (ii) Ethnic discrimination,
- (iii) Anthropological misinterpretations, and

(iv) Dominant Tswana discourse.

These factors are inter-related and consistently overlap and reinforce each other in such a way that they cumulatively obscure the reality of Khoisan historical experiences. This is nowhere better illustrated than in the misguided anthropological postulates of the 1950s and 1960s as already pointed out. The issue of San population numbers is basically a political problem. The Botswana Government, in pursuit of a vigorous policy of social control through a prolonged process of depoliticisation (see Chapter 6), has consistently employed a strategy of co-option and assimilation of minority ethnic groups. This policy requires that the ethnic composition of all tribal groups and their numerical strength are not reflected in both national and international population league tables. Paradoxically, the same policy of social control posits that there are eight "principal tribes" in the country. This concept, albeit enshrined in the constitution of Botswana, clearly contradicts Government policy since the criteria for determining the socio-political status of each ethnic group remains tenuous and arbitrary (2).

Be that as it may, social scientists researching on the ethnic histories of various social groups have over the years relied on conservative estimates based on either the administrative or the traditional/historical locations of the groups under investigation. This approach, although far from being accurate as our analysis will demonstrate, has been made much easier by the fact that national districts and towns in Botswana are officially demarcated according to ethnic units and their relevant areas of settlement. An analysis of the political justification of this apparent sanction of tribal distinctions and the attendant "tribal autonomy" is discussed in Chapters 2 and 3.

This continued reliance on such conservative population estimates, however, has some rather serious limitations. The use of ethnic-based districts to determine the numerical strength of various tribal groups does not take into consideration critical issues like inter-tribal forms of social intercourse like marriages, and population migration. Systemic climatic conditions and the encashment of natural resources since the days of colonialism, and indeed even before the advent of European material culture and forms of governance, imply that seasonality and social mobility may actually have long undermined the effectiveness of this approach to population studies. But this is as yet a matter that requires further research.

Holm and Molutsi (1989) estimate that the Khoisan constitute six percent of the Botswana population. The 1991 Population and Housing Census put the total population of the country at 1.3 million (RoB, 1992). If we accept the estimate by Molutsi and Holm, then the Khoisan account for some 78,000 of the total population. However, this is still misleading in that, according to the Central Statistics Office, "total population" in this context simply means "the number of persons who were reported and recorded to have spent the night previous to the enumeration of the household" (*ibid.*, p. ii). Thus among the 78,000 people technically assumed

to be Khoisan may also be found numerous visitors, resident missionaries of various ethnic backgrounds and religious orientations, development and extension workers. As both Government officials and activist academics always complain, the army of various scholars and tourists who flood into the Kalahari region annually is always too high. In fact, it is the preponderance of researchers in that region which led an official of the Ministry of Local Government and Lands to comment:

... one often feels that the research business is one of the few remaining growth industries and that it is extremely centred on this continent (quoted in Wily, 1981, p. 35).

This concern eventually led to the issuance of a Presidential Directive that has since evolved into an executive policy for control of research among the Khoisan: the single most effective official policy on matters specifically relating to the Khoisan to emerge from cabinet (see Memorandum 543 12/75 of 10th April, 1975, cited in Wily, 1981). At its inception this policy targeted foreign researchers but its effectiveness still has to endure the incessant interest in San research by the local intellectual community as evidenced by the establishment of a Basarwa research unit at the University of Botswana in 1994.

The situation in the Kalahari and Ghanzi districts, home to the majority of the Khoisan people, is further compounded by the presence of both Afrikaner and Tswana farmers whose unwelcome residency, dating back almost a hundred years, was further entrenched by the agro-pastoral reforms initiated by the post-colonial state in the 1970s as demonstrated in the previous chapters. There are studies which have sought to examine the question of San population within a regional context. Thus Hitchcock and Holm (1993) argue that the Khoisan of southern Africa are the largest former foragers in Africa, the second being the central African countries, 34,000 live in Botswana. In percentage terms, however, they conclude that the San probably make up less than four percent of the total population.

The figure reached by the former seems to be more acceptable and actually comes very close to the conclusion made by Gulbrandsen, Karlsen and Lexow which accepts "a minimum population of some 41,000 in the mid-1980s and a maximum of 60,000" (Quoted in Good, 1993, p. 206). The political economy of San socioeconomic development and our knowledge of their spatial distribution are also made complex by the apparent prevalence of discrimination and prejudice in both the dominant Tswana social discourse and misrepresentations in the national historical/anthropological literature. In a critical exposition of the impact of social denigration on San studies one commentator has noted that

... each Khoisan specialist has his or her own, often idiosyncratic, spellings for various San group names, and preferences change from publication to publication (Barnard, 1992, pp. 7-8).

This tendency is clearly manifest in several Government and academic publications and reports by travellers, international donor agencies, and non-specialists of various intellectual persuasions. One result of this tendency has been a continuing inability to point out precisely who the real San people are, a theme that is highlighted in Edwin Wilmsen's provocative article *"The real Bushman is the male one: labour and power in the creation of Basarwa ethnicity"* published in *Botswana Notes and Records* (1990).

All the names used by some of these writers in reference to the Khoisan, like "bushman", "khoe" and "masarwa" carry unpleasant and negative connotations. For instance, until recently it was common to find some local intellectuals and political leaders calling the Khoisan "masarwa". The latter terminology has a derogatory appellation in that linguistically and historically the prefix "ma-", in the Setswana language, denotes subhuman or servile origins, while the more commonly used prefix "ba-" as in "Bamangwato", for instance, denotes a sense of national consciousness as it has historically been used to refer to threatening or different people. This is evident in that all the eighteenth and nineteenth century invading hordes of Ndebele people, Afrikaners and Europeans were pejoratively referred to as Matabele, Malburu and Makgoa respectively.

In other words Setswana-speaking groups used derogatory terminology both to assert their own self-identification and pride against powerful enemies from the southern coastline and also to enhance their dominant position internally against subject ethnic groups internally. Historical documentation indicates that dominant Tswana chiefdoms constructed ethnic identities through such manipulative social discourse to impose political and economic domination upon a number of subordinated and disparate peoples in the previous century. Solway (1994b) observes that;

ascribed and stigmatised ethnic identity... was employed to exclude people from participating in valued activities, gaining access to resources and holding political office.... (p. 255).

However, the San, unlike other subject tribes like the Kalanga, Bayeyi, Basubiya and Bakgalagadi, suffered a worse fate since Tswana hegemony over the San was ostensibly intent on absolute assimilation. To this end it is not surprising to note that at its most imperial level dominant Tswana social discourse even renders the Khoisan ignorant of their past as indicated in the opening section of this chapter.

The confinement of the San in the most arid parts of the Kalahari desert under an all-encompassing Tswana political and economic structure, did not only intensify their dependence on the benevolence of their masters, but also facilitated an elaborate evolution of patronage networks which, in addition to promoting the valorisation of Tswana primordial features in pursuit of political power in a most uncertain colonial geopolitical context, simultaneously denied the Khoisan an equal opportunity for group mobilisation. But as our analysis will illustrate, this

strategy is now under threat as peasant communities in Botswana are beginning to turn against the post-independence state.

In the 1970s, however, the use of dominant Tswana social discourse, coupled with Tswana numerical strength, played a critical role in determining the economic fortunes of both the latter and the Khoisan. For instance, by 1978 the extension of physical infrastructure and services to the remotest citizens virtually ground to a halt as hitherto uncontrolled inter-ministerial conflicts assumed a consensual perspective that purported to "... [operate] in reality by a different set of criteria, namely the 'numbers game'... whereby rural dwellers qualified for services on the basis of their population" (Wily, 1981, p. 84). This conventional large population agglomeration approach (i.e. the larger the resident group the more services and facilities) exacerbated the crisis of remote areas under development.

Meanwhile, it is imperative to turn to the question of significance of the role of the interface between social science and policy making in determining the accrual of economic benefits to various social groups in post-colonial Botswana. In Chapter 3 we revealed how the intellectual elites provided the post-colonial state with an ideological idiom to initiate and execute environmentally unfriendly policies like the Tribal Grazing Land Policy which turned out to be short-sighted class projects that currently threaten drastically to reduce both man and beast to the most rudimentary forms of existence, especially in the Kalahari region and vicinity.

As we shall see, especially in the closing sections of this chapter, where modern forms of Tswana peasant resistance and the dynamic nature of its varied dimensions are discussed, the asymmetric accumulation of political power by Tswana tribal entities in the run up to the declaration of independence in the 1950s and the consolidation of political power in the 1970s, unwittingly found intellectual justification in publications like Thomas's (1988) *The Harmless People* and Wiseman's (1974) *The Peaceful Outsiders*. Both texts, consciously or unconsciously, poignantly purport to depict the plight of the Khoisan as (naturally) given. More surprising, however, is that even a brilliant and intellectually incisive piece of academic work like Kuper's (1970) classic study of politics in a Kalahari village may be possibly interpreted as abetting the same perception. Critics have noted that, although trying to establish that the politics of the village were democratic, Kuper makes no mention of the Khoisan participating in any activities of governance.

The scenario that emerges from the analysis above is, therefore, that of an acquiescent Khoisan at peace with themselves and their environment. However, such analysis as is evident in the literature above is inadequate and its patently ahistorical nature can hardly account for social transformation. To appreciate fully the marginality of Khoisan in rapidly changing historical circumstances, we need to analyze the dynamic relations between the political and cultural

definition of their identity and its material and social grounding. To this end the following observation is most instructive:

... to understand the continual social, political and economic marginality of the Sarwa (sic) category within Tswana society... we must examine the way a set of ideas about Sarwa identity have interacted with the political economy within which these ideas were expressed.... In spite of the profound changes in the Tswana political economy - absorption into the regional labour market, a significant alteration in the agricultural base, and an increasing commercialisation in a capitalist economy - Tswana cultural definition of the Sarwa category has continued to structure the marginality of the group.... Without access to discourse themselves, [Basarwa] became an object, the "others" for... the Tswana (Motzafi-Haller, 1994, pp. 544-545).

5.5 Post-Colonial State and Facets of San Deprivation

In the previous chapters we examined the socio-economic status of the bureaucracy in Botswana and illustrated how the relationship between bureaucratic interests and public policy has perpetuated rural underdevelopment in the country in the last thirty years. In this section we seek to provide detailed dynamic analysis of both cash and non-cash income distribution in the rural sector by focusing specific attention on two regional ethnic groups that today still constitute the poorest section of the population; viz, the San and Bakgalagadi. Our intention in this chapter is to introduce more insights into the hypothesis advanced in the previous chapters that agricultural extension is "true communication or reciprocal dialogue", and not the regular issuance of communiqués by expert agronomists, the bureaucratic elite, and politicians to peasant farmers (see Chapter 3).

The San and Bakgalagadi deserve particular attention for two reasons. First, unlike other sedentary agropastoral communities, these ethnic groups are very vulnerable to natural visitations like drought and, consequently, experience more instances of conjunctural poverty; a situation which further exacerbates the circle of relative poverty that has characterised their lives throughout the colonial period and immediate post-independence period. This is particularly true for the period between 1965 and the late 1980s (3). The second reason is that the fragile nature of the lives of these people, often completely dependent on the selective benevolence of Tswana cattle feudal lords in the colonial period and the pseudo-welfarist and "democratic paternalism" of the post-colonial state (see Chapter 6 for a comprehensive analysis of these issues), affords us the opportunity to expand our analysis by assessing the relative influence of forces of nature, like the recurrent drought epidemics, and state policy in fostering dependent relations between the former social groups and their politically and economically dominant Tswana neighbours.

This latter approach is crucial since it affords us the opportunity to debunk ideological arguments by the ruling elite that it is drought, and not public policy, that accounts for the preponderant

presence of both structural and relative poverty in the rural sector (4). By looking at actions taken by individuals (e.g. Chiefs, politicians, missionaries, activist researchers, bureaucrats etc etc) and institutions (e.g. ministerial departments, local Government authorities, non-Governmental organisations etc etc), we seek to assess the links between "structure and agency" and establish how their interactions have affected the material welfare of the subjects under investigation at critical historical junctures in Botswana; a situation which is even more pertinent given that Botswana has in the last three decades experienced periods of both extreme poverty and unprecedented prosperity (Good, 1992, 1993, and 1994).

In other words we consider the cyclical recurrence of drought, the rapid growth of a liquid economy, without the corresponding evolution of institutional capacity to eradicate stratified modes of distribution inherited from imperial Britain, and erratic, uncertain and often haphazard state policies and programmes as "revelatory crisis" in which socio-economic and political structural contradictions are exposed. Our analysis will indicate that such exposure, albeit not necessarily establishing indisputable causality between the said structural contradictions and the deteriorating socio-economic conditions of the San and Bakgalagadi societies, theoretically provides a set of elective affinities that leave no room for any alternatives save to conclude that the plight of the latter groups arises from dependence on a state long captured by other interests (5). This approach is particularly suitable to the context of Botswana since the Government, as clearly illustrated in the previous chapters, has developed a propensity to respond to such revelatory crisis by disrupting, in the words of one social scientist, "conventional routine sufficiently to allow [itself] to innovate normative codes" (Solway, 1994a, p. 472).

a) San People: A Community Under Stress

Extensive research lends colour to the supposition that San deprivation is predicated on the following facets of life and existence:

- a) lack of land and water rights;
- b) exclusion from the livestock industry;
- c) rudimentary forms of local political leadership owing largely to state social control;
- d) the existence of imperfect labour markets in San settlements and
- e) the pervasive influence of state policy in directing income-maintenance strategies in rural households. We proceed by discussing (a) and (b) under one

subheading and (c), (d) and (e) under another one towards the end of the chapter.

5.6 Land: Contradictions between Individualised and Communal Property Claims

A review of the literature on San accessibility, or exclusion, from land in Botswana indicate that three factors have, at different historical junctures, characterised the pattern and nature of their population settlements. First, when the first advocacy of a settlement approach to the so-called "Bushman problem" evolved in colonial Bechuanaland in the first decade of this century, the intention was ostensibly to curb the rate of alleged stock theft and cattle rustling by the Khoisan and also to avert rangeland destruction through veld fires caused by marauding bands of the San (Russell, 1976, pp. 189-190). The formulation of land-use policy was at that time prompted by a desire on the part of both the colonial administration and indigenous agropastoral farmers to promote the institutionalisation of a national system of law and order among Khoisan peasants and also to protect pastures in the process.

In the previous century the San did not only lose their land to sedentary Tswana pastoralists. The establishment of the Ghanzi Freehold Farming Block between 1889 and 1899 marked the last phase of their land dispossession. This mammoth land grab was precipitated by geopolitical imperialist machinations that would have been esoteric to the ordinary San peasant. In spite of the fact that 20,000 San, about three quarters of the San population at the turn of the this century (Silberbauer, 1965), had been displaced by encroachment on their land by Bantu pastoralists and their cattle, the Ghanzi Freehold Farming Block was the first cattle ranching block to be established by the colonial administration consequent to the annexation of Bechuanaland Protectorate in 1885 partly to provide land for Europeans in that area but mainly to establish a buffer zone in the far west against German expansionism. Anxiety about Germanic imperialist designs in South West Africa (now Namibia) worried Cecil Rhodes so much that he was compelled to:

offer hardy Boer settlers large tracts of free land to establish themselves as ranchers. The location of the block was the Ghanzi Limestone Ridge, uniquely water-bearing in the arid western Kalagari. For that same reason the area had always been important to the local indigenous San population, the entire Ridge falling within one or other of the district territories of each group (Wily, 1981, p. 13).

Wily further notes that this European land settlement scheme eventually embraced some 18,000 square kilometres of profitable hunting, gathering and grazing land, turning the dispossessed San into squatters on their own traditional land.

Second, as the widespread expansion of British borehole technology intensified and deepened, socio-economic and political relations within the colonial political economy in the 1930s to the 1950s (see Chapter 2), a more "human-centred", as opposed to the purely legislative approach pursued earlier, was adopted to address the intractable problems caused by San displacement. The 1931 official report on the conditions existing among the San in the BamaNgwato Reserve (Tagart, 1931) was the first of several others that were to culminate in the evolution of an official colonial policy towards the San people of Botswana (Hermans, 1978). The Tagart report concluded that San-Tswana relations were characterised by master-servant relations that bordered on "serf-like" relationships. The response of the colonial administration was to appoint J W. Joyce, an assistant magistrate, to carry out a survey of the San and deal with their affairs between 1934 and 1937.

The colonial administration embarked on a number of development projects to improve the lot of the embattled San people in the 1930s. For instance, in 1938, it established an agricultural scheme aimed at teaching the San cultivation skills. On the eve of independence more vigorous efforts were initiated to address the plight of the San. One of the most far-reaching official actions came about in 1958 when a Bushman Survey Officer, G. B. Silberbauer, was appointed by the colonial administration to

... look into the situation of the Bushman people, with a view to seeing how best they might be included within the national life of the future independent Bechuanaland (Silberbauer, 1965).

The latter was a lengthy survey whose wide-ranging recommendations, published in a widely distributed *Bushman Survey Report* (1965), were to impact strongly on official policy towards the San up to 1974 when the post-colonial Government appointed Wily as a full-time Bushman Development Officer; a position she held until 1978 when she admitted failure and subsequently resigned. Silberbauer estimated the total population of the San in Bechuanaland to be 24,652 and noted that the majority of these people were scattered widely over the Protectorate, and often interspersed amongst agro-pastoralists in small groups of between 10 and 50 individuals.

In 1963, Silberbauer, who was devoting most of his time "to studying the very traditional and unculturised 5,000 San in the vast central region of the country", became extremely instrumental in the designation of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, embracing some 32,000 square kilometres of the Kalahari veld, as home to the displaced San. This gazetting was to prove important in partially protecting the San from the livestock developments of the 1970s discussed in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

Meanwhile, two aspects of this official colonial policy towards the San are worth noting. First, it is crucial to observe that Silberbauer's terms of reference imply that the colonial administration saw the extension of Reservations to cover the San people as an appropriate strategy to deal with

their displacement; the radical departure from this strategy, by the post-colonial Government in the 1970s, as our analysis will illustrate later, was not to augur well for the future of these people.

Second, the fact that San relocation was associated with the preservation of fauna and flora in the Kalahari desert was to provide a basis for an environmental approach to the San question that was to be grossly abused by the post-colonial Government under the pretext of striking an environmental balance between nature and man in both the Kalahari and the Ghanzi districts. We shall return to this aspect of Government policy later. Meanwhile, the 1964-65 Silberbauer recommendations proposed sizable water developments within the Central Kalahari Game Reserve to enable an estimated 4,000-5,000 San to remain there indefinitely. Wily (1981) records that one (deep) borehole was successfully drilled in the Xade area of the Reserve and a grant of R15,000 acquired from OXFAM (United Kingdom) to drill a further five. The Bushman Survey Officer had proposed a total of 15 boreholes to be drilled in the Reserve. However,

... the disappointing results of the Geological Survey of the area (WS. 2/5 (93) 5.4.65, and the G.S. 7/4 (13), 13.9.65), together with the difficulties in finding a competent driller for such a remote area, and the emerging preoccupation of the Geological Survey Department with drought relief drilling, halted the project and eventually (5 July, 1966) OXFAM withdraw its grant (*ibid.*, p. 11).

Nevertheless, one must emphasise that pressure for initiating and executing San projects of this nature derived largely from international criticisms regarding the exploitation of Khoisan peasant communities by their Tswana overlords. For instance, Dame Joan Vickers, reacting to allegations by the British Anti-Slavery Society that the San were being threatened with extinction as a result of "the enslavement and... killing by their neighbours" raised a query in the House of Commons in Britain on the 1st April 1965 and asked:

... what arrangements are being made to safeguard their livelihood and improve their (San) living conditions (BNA, 1965b)

Local tribal authorities on the other hand were entirely indifferent to the plight of these people as the opening sections of this Chapter indicate. The final recommendations of the Silberbauer report also addressed the condition of some 5,000 San who were labourers and squatters on the Ghanzi Freehold Farming Block (Childers, 1976). The establishment of the latter cattle ranching block revolutionised land property rights in the Bechuanaland Protectorate in that, whereas Tswana agro-pastoral peasant communities practised communal grazing (see Chapter 2), the colonial administration gave the Ghanzi European settlers freehold title over the land they settled allowing individual white farmers to fence in the grazing land for ranches. By 1958, when Silberbauer embarked on his survey, over 100 enclosed ranches had mushroomed in the Ghanzi area and white settlers had the legal right to evict resident San.

Silberbauer considered the plight of these people which he regarded as a problem of escalating unemployment among farm cattle herders and, consequently, recommended a solution:

...improving the labour market by raising the standard of farming in Ghanzi which would put farmers in a position to pay better wages (Silberbauer, 1965, p. 137).

He further argued that:

Government should establish an experimental and breeding station on one of the vacant Ghanzi farms to improve the standard of farming and to train [the] Bushman as farm labourers (*ibid.*, p. 138).

More fundamentally perhaps was the argument that

successful pupil farmers ... (should) be given boreholes and stock to start as independent farmers.... (*ibid.*, p. 138).

The latter point is crucial for what Silberbauer was in effect, consciously or unconsciously, advocating was the entitlement of the San to the point of bringing them to equal status with Tswana agro-pastoral farmers and their European counterparts.

The Silberbauer recommendations were initially welcomed by the post-colonial Government and in 1965 the Ministry of Home affairs was charged with the responsibility to implement them. However, a special proviso was inserted in the terms of acceptance to the effect that:

In general the recommendations are unlikely to be very controversial, if policy avoids the obvious pitfalls: (a) of appearing to treat Bushman on a par with game in the Reserve, and leaving those outside the Reserve entirely to voluntary efforts, (b) of expending scarce resources in providing Bushman with facilities for which the people as a whole are eager, on an exceptionally favoured basis (BNA, 1965a).

This latter memorandum is crucial in that debates about the relative merits of preserving San interests alongside Kalahari fauna and flora, on the one hand, and questions about the wisdom of pursuing a policy of apparent "separate development" towards them as a nation without equal regard to other poor sections of the national population, on the other, were to culminate in (i) a ministerial decision not to use domestic sources of revenue to implement the Silberbauer recommendations (*ibid.*) and (ii) resentment towards the "special treatment" of the San peasants became so pronounced in post-colonial official discourse that in spite of a query on the negative attitude of Tswana political elite in the British House of Commons, made in the Committee stage of the Bechuanaland Independence Bill, the "Bushman question" faded from local discussion; a discussion of the question in the House of Lords, led by Lord Allport in February 1965, solicited no interest in the self-governing Protectorate.

Meanwhile, internal developments in the immediate post-independence Botswana were moving in a direction that was to all intents and purposes insensitive to the condition of the San. The movement from communal to individual tenure of both grazing land and farm land in Botswana, which started at the turn of the century and was intensified in the 1930s as illustrated in Chapter 2, was further exacerbated by the introduction of regulatory instruments for rangeland management aimed at formally institutionalising land-tenure, land-use and water-use between 1968 and 1975. Chief among these privatisation measures, were the Tribal Land Act of 1968, enunciated only two years after the formal attainment of independence in September 1966, and the Tribal Grazing Land Policy of 1975.

The Tribal Land Act (and subsequent amendments) stripped tribal chiefs and headmen of their land allocation powers which were vested into the hands of the Ministry of Local Government and Lands whose hybrid land boards (they draw staff from both local and central Government structures) are now authorised to allocate tribal land, some 71% of the country, to tribesmen. The Tribal Grazing Land Policy of 1975 ushered in a leasehold tenure regime, for propertied Tswana farmers, with lease periods of 50 years subject to renewal and inheritance (Arntzen, 1990). By the early 1980s some 200 large commercial cattle ranches had mushroomed in the Ghanzi district, where San populations are heavily concentrated. Although the lease provisions could make for economic rents, in practice these leases contained few and ambiguous conditions, and at ridiculous rentals of P256 per 6,400 hectare ranch (in 1976), rents were set at sub-economic levels (with a three year grace period). In size these ranches averaged between 4,900 and 6,400 hectares each and in 1986, with new lease properties declared in six other districts, they covered 50,000 square kilometres of Botswana (Arntzen, 1990).

Rangeland commercialisation worsened the Khoisan situation in several ways. First, the Tribal Land Act (1968) (No. 54 of 1968), and the most important of its amendments (No. 6 of 1970), which introduced Land Boards and delineated their land allocation powers in all the national districts, did not specify the rights of the San to land nor did subsequent amendments (cf Hitchcock & Holm 1993). Under the legal provisions of this piece of legislation, one of the important pre-requisites for land allocation to individuals by Land Boards is to consider, prior to instituting a customary grant, the status of the applicant as "a tribesman" (Republic of Botswana, 1973: Regulation 8(1)(a)). Section 20(1) (TLA No.54 of 1968) stipulates that no grant of customary land rights should be made to any person who is not "a tribesman" or an exempted person. In Section 2 of the Tribal Land Act "a tribesman" is defined as "any citizen of Botswana who is a member of the tribe occupying the Tribal area" (TLA No. 54 of 1968, also as amended in 1973).

The Tribal Land Act perpetuates a serious omission in that, by granting common law status to Tswana customary land law, it effectively excludes consideration of San land needs or land rights, based as it is upon the predominant historical Tswana agro-pastoral land use patterns.

The historical displacement of the San by both White settlers and dominant Tswana polities is not taken into account. The British colonial administration, which introduced tribal based Reserves in the Bechuanaland Protectorate, did not give the San a Reserve of their own. Scattered across the country within and without Tswana tribal Reserves (now districts), the San are, according to the Tribal Land Act Clause, on technical interpretation, not "tribesmen".

The provisions of the Tribal Land Act, which were paradoxically occasioned by the transference of power from a despotic traditional chiefly authority to a supposedly more democratic dispensation of local Government, can actually be assailed for, in the famous words of one critic, "emphasising tribal affiliation as a qualifying entitlement to land in a modern era" (Ngongola 1992a). One critical aspect of this Act is that since "citizens" primarily qualify for customary grants only in "the Tribal Area", "non-tribesmen" find themselves in a difficult situation as the legal provisions explicitly exclude political assimilation, as had hitherto been the historical experience, as qualifying entitlement within a foreign tribal entity, in favour of entitlement by bureaucratic ministerial exemption.

It was under the background of such exclusionary legislative measures that many Land Boards concluded that local San were not "tribesmen" and therefore not entitled to land allocation under the Tribal Land Act. This trend was evident even in those areas that the San had occupied for over three or four generations (Wily, 1979a, p. 33).

These apparently unjust exclusionary measures, affecting some 45,000 peasants, found legal assent and institutional sanction in the official statement of opinion by the Attorney General Chambers in January 1978 when a litigation consultant to the Attorney General concluded:

... the Masarwa (sic) have always been true nomads, owing no allegiance to any chief or tribe, but have ranged far and wide for a very long time over large areas of the Kalahari in which they have always had unlimited hunting rights, which they enjoy even today despite the Fauna Conservation Act. The right of Masarwa to hunt is, of course, very important and valuable as hunting is their main source of sustenance...it appears to me that true nomad Masarwa can have no rights of any kind except rights to hunting (Will, 1978, File No. 2/1/1).

Although the Ministry of Local Government and Lands officially distanced itself, in a statement, from this discriminatory approach arguing that ethnicity was not in principle a condition or criteria for the acceptance, or rejection, of application for land allocation, research indicates that subsequent blatantly discriminatory Land Board decisions and practices went unpunished (Werbner, 1982 and Wilmsen, 1989b).

(a) Liz Wily and the Struggle for San Land and Water Entitlements 1974-1978

In late April 1974 the Government appointed Miss Elizabeth Wily as a full-time Bushman Development Officer. This appointment was not unprecedented since we have already noted that the colonial administration appointed an assistant magistrate, J. W. Joyce, to deal with matters pertaining to the San as far back as 1934. George Silberbauer also assumed a similar task in 1958. In 1971 Marcus Rowland, a Motswana Principal in the Ministry of Local Government and Lands, was given responsibility for the portfolio of Bushman Affairs. It is important, however, to observe that Government interest in the welfare of the San was not inspired by any euphoric post-independence altruistic concerns for the marginalised minorities. The pressure to enforce a range of measures entitling marginalised San communities to the right(s) to share to the full the social heritage and live the lives of a civilised people commensurate with the standards prevailing in society (see the *Constitution of Botswana*, Chapter II, No. 3c), came from an enlightened section of the Ghanzi farming community, which was influential in the Ghanzi District Council, and private individuals.

In its first District Development Plan for the period 1968-1972 (financial years 1968/69 - 1972/73), the Ghanzi District Council stated that:

...we are conscious that the Ghanzi has a unique problem in the Bushmen, a distinct social and racial group totalling two-thirds of the District's population. The Bushmen require special assistance By establishing the Central Kalahari Reserve, Government made it clear that it recognised the need to guarantee the Bushman's position. What was not perhaps fully appreciated at the time was that the Bushmen are already inextricably involved in the stock-raising economy of Ghanzi as workers on the farms and as clients in the villages. Very many of them are neither willing nor indeed able to resume a purely hunting economy and if they are to play their full part in the development of the District, efforts must be made to settle them as stock owners in an undeveloped area of the District (RoB, 1968, pp. 39-40).

The Government responded to these suggestions positively and accordingly incorporated proposed San projects in the 1968/73 National Development Plan. However, bureaucratic wrangling aborted all the proposed San schemes (i.e. the privatisation of the D'Kar Mission, resettlement of San squatters, revival of a tannery at D'Kar) and emphasis shifted to "special policies" on San people.

This dramatic change of policy led to a series of heated debates about how best to deal with the "Bushman Problem". Central to these debates was the issue of whether it was advisable to treat the San as a special group. The position of the Ministry of Finance and Development was that the San should not be seen to be receiving undue special assistance which might cause the resentment of other poor citizens. This position became more pronounced in Government White

Paper No. 1 of 1972 entitled *Rural Development in Botswana*. It re-emphasised the Government's dual economic strategy which aimed at

securing rapid and large returns to the nation from intensive capital investment in mining and other viable modern industries mainly aimed at export markets... and re-investing the proceeds of these investments to promote labour intensive activities and improve services in the rural areas (RoB, 1972c, Para. 6).

But it also had an ominous warning for the marginalised groups in the rural sector, especially the San:

social and economic change must not favour the rich or deprive the poor, but this emphasis on equality must not lead us into assuming that the living standards of all the population can be raised by redistributing the assets of the few people who are relatively well off (*ibid.*, Para. II).

Thus in effect Government political policy was legitimising stratified distribution at a time when renewed interest on the San called for a development trajectory tempered with social justice and equality of entitlement and opportunity.

The brief career of Elizabeth Wily at the Ministry of Local Government and Lands, as Bushmen Development Officer, was an uphill struggle against an explicit economic policy that advocated rapid rates of growth at the expense of social justice. She advocated an interventionist approach that directly involved the San in their own development. Paternalism towards the San was to be discouraged in favour of direct participation and the San were to be "our poor backward citizens" who needed a "boost programme" so that they could "benefit from normal rural development action" (Wily, 1979a, 1979b, 1980 and 1981).

The implementation of the San development programme coincided with a very ambitious national programme of land reform; the Tribal Grazing Land Policy (see Chapter 3). The Bushmen Development Officer was initially optimistic that this policy, which made a specific commitment to "safeguard the interests of those who own only a few cattle or none at all" (RoB, 1975a), would promote San advancement (Wily, 1979b). In any case a directive to all District Commissioners, District Councils, and Land Boards was circulated after the publication of TGLP policy guidelines stating that:

the Ministry [of Local Government and Lands] wishes to make explicit in the land use planning exercise connected with the Tribal Grazing Land Development Programme the importance of evaluating and taking account of the land needs of Basarwa. This is important at all stages of the data collection and survey programme, and the process of consultation (LG 2/20 18 July 1975, cited in Wily, 1979b).

However, as it turned out there were no "empty" areas for the proposed commercial farms and, in addition to commercialising existing cattle-post areas, nationwide agro-pastoral commercialisation encroached into areas where sizeable San communities lived (see Chapter 3), thus forestalling any prospects for "development" in their own settlements. As opposing lobbies emerged within and without Government institutions, official discourse assumed a most unprecedented tone of indifferent belligerence. A senior District official summed up this mood of exasperation at a special Land Use Planning Advisory Group meeting in January 1978 thus:

We have had enough "going to the people". Consultation takes too much time. We should abandon it. We need to go ahead. All this discussion and planning is getting in the way of development. Basarwa, if they are in the way, should be gotten out of the way so that we can put up our fences (Hitchcock, 1982, p. 26).

As the enclosure movement intensified and the welfare of the San was subsumed under an all encompassing Remote Area Development Programme, catering to all poor remote area dwellers (estimated at 60,000 people in 1977 of whom 30,000 were San), the most important policies the Bushmen Development Programme had envisaged witnessed a radical change from self-reliance to benevolent state paternalism. In the words of George Silberbauer, echoed some twelve years earlier, the San thus remained in a position of "inertia and stolid acceptance of their dependence on the Bantu" (Silberbauer, 1965, p. 137). One Member of Parliament criticised Wily's approach to San development as a form of "separate development" (Botswana Daily News, 15 March, 1978, p. 2). Meanwhile, the position of Bushmen Development Officer was localised and, officially regarded as destitute, the San became directly dependent on the state.

5.7 The San and Dependent Development

The above analysis demonstrates how state bureaucratic domination became a critical determinant factor in San social transformation between 1968, when the Tribal Land Act received parliamentary assent and was subsequently legislated into law, and 1979/80 when the enclosure effects of the Tribal Grazing Land Policy became more pronounced.

Before her acrimonious departure from service as Government officer in charge of the Bushmen Development Programme (also known as Local Government 32), Liz Wily decided to dispel charges of "separate development" by recommending to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Local Government and Lands that San development programmes be incorporated into what she called Extra Rural Dwellers (ERDs) development assistance schemes. The "extra rural dwellers" were considered to be (i) poor rural citizens (i.e. living below the poverty datum line); (ii) resident outside villages or on the fringes; (iii) generally non-stock holders; (iv) partially dependent on hunting and gathering for subsistence and (v) often culturally and linguistically distinct (Minute to Permanent Secretary, MLGL, LG 1/3, 4 April 1977, cited in Wily, 1981). By this suggestion the departing development officer was in effect acceding to the arguments by

some politicians and state bureaucrats that special policy provisions for problems "unique to" or affecting the San, to the exclusion of general problems affecting other poor peasant communities, amounted to advocating a form of separate development.

Liz Wily was aware that contemporary rural development initiatives did not reach both the San and other "extra rural dwellers". Her conviction was that because of their "backwardness" the San deserved affirmative action style assistance. But from the above recommendation it is possible that by 1977 the development officer was beginning to realise the imminence of the need to slant development programmes toward all poor sections of the rural peasantry. On the other hand it may well be that this reversal of philosophy was a ploy to preserve the status quo of the Bushmen Development Programme - even though in an expanded form. Whatever the intention was, this retreat into a sphere of ambiguity, in retrospect, backfired tragically.

The new incumbent turned out to be extremely wary of any efforts to secure land for the San, and tended to favour their villagisation: to make them like the sedentary (presumably civilised) agriculturist and pastoral Batswana (see proceedings of the Remote Area Development Programme workshop, 29 May to 2 June, Gaborone, 1978). In 1977 the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning had accepted that proposal by Wily and formally changed the name of National Development Plan Project LG 32 from Bushmen Development Programme to Extra Rural Development (LG 1/3 VII [79], July 7, 1977). In October 1977 the name Remote Area Development Programme was officially chosen to replace the latter (Daily News, 7 December, 1978).

Thus, by the late 1970s, the "Bushman Problem" became an officially acknowledged aspect of rural underdevelopment. It is against this background that we use Government's commitment to this problem as a yardstick measure of its general policy towards rural underdevelopment. The Government's political, administrative, financial and institutional ability to reverse the economic woes of the remote area dwelling peasants should be a useful indicator of its commitment to rural development in general. Chapter 6 discusses the consequences of Government agricultural policies in the rural economy in the 1980s and the early 1990s and their effects on various small communities scattered around the country: officially referred to as Remote Area Dwellers. Meanwhile, we turn our attention to San political response to ineffective Government economic policy.

5.8 The San: Internationalisation of Ethnic Politics

Some impoverished RADs, like the San, have found it worthwhile to project protest politics beyond the realm of the nation-state: a manifestation of the country's democratic deficit and loss of trust in the state. When the Government, with the connivance and assistance of the Kalagari Conservation Society, tried to evict the San from the Central Kgalagadi Game

Reserve in 1986, the latter ignored Government pleas and appealed directly to Survival International who, with other human rights groups, raised so much international furore that the re-settlement scheme was halted (Harden, 1988). A second attempt to implement the same plan in May 1996 raised impassioned debates in the House of Lords in London, received extensive international media coverage and prompted the largest circulation paper in Botswana to draw the Government's attention to the embarrassing aspects of internationalised protest politics (Mmegi Wa Dikgang, 24-25 May 1996).

This analysis takes the emergence of irredentism, separatism and universalised politics as an indictment of the development model in Botswana; especially the unabated growth of distribution inequalities in the rural economy. It is too early to diagnose the institutional impacts of these political developments in terms of state authority, legitimacy and capacity. But confidence in the electoral process as a means of redressing social injustices is still evident. In the 1994 elections the BDP vote was cut everywhere, its majorities were reduced in every constituency and three long serving cabinet ministers were ousted from parliament by the electorate (Midweek Sun, 19 October, 1994). In the Ghanzi district, Eight San candidates easily won over their BDP counterparts. It is clear now that the BDP is faced with a serious political backlash; not a big price to pay for years of squandered opportunities and rural underdevelopment.

CHAPTER SIX

AGRO-PASTORAL REFORMS AND STATE EXPANSIONISM : CONFLICT AND COLLABORATION

Introduction

The chapter is divided into several sections. Section 6.1, while not entirely neglecting the continuing exclusion of the San from access to resources, shifts emphasis on this theme by expanding to include other poor sections of minority groups. Section 6.2 addresses two key aspects of the present thesis, namely; the depth and scale of the distributions of Government expenditure through mass-based agricultural programme, and secondly, the politically penetrating networks of patronage that emerged as a result. Section 6.3 focuses attention on the various political forms of state expansionism in the rural economy and tries to account for the behaviour of the various agents and actors involved. In section 6.4 we reflect on an aspect of "exclusionary politics" characterised by the using of forms of "political participation" as an instrument of centralised bureaucratic domination of life in the countryside. In the last but one section we discuss the political economy of agricultural input subsidisation and specifically highlight the instruments and talent effects of Government agricultural policy. Finally, we draw attention to the political consequences of state action.

6.1 Remote Area Dwellers

The first Remote Area Dwellers (RADS) workshop, held between May and June 1979, designated RADS as those poor peasants living outside traditional village structures in a "geographic and economic sense" (RoB, 1978, p. 4). It reported that these people lived in small communities of 5 to 500; they had no access to basic services and facilities; lacked income generating opportunities; had no recognised local leaders of their own; and they were constantly in dependent relationships with richer members of Tswana society. In its final recommendations the workshop called for intensified Government interventionism by way of providing them with ways of achieving access to land, water, extension advice and development information. It pointed out that the lives of these people were characterised by low levels of literacy, semi-nomadism, egalitarianism, and lack of hierarchical political structures. The workshop concluded that they were for the most part "a silent sector politically" (*ibid.*, p. 4).

In 1978 the population of RADS was estimated at 60,000 of whom half were San. Table 1 shows that by 1992 the number of RADS was still considerably high.

TABLE 1: REMOTE AREA DWELLER POPULATION IN BOTSWANA

DISTRICT	POPULATION
Central Ghanzi	25,000
Kgalagadi	3,750
Kgatleng	800
Kweneng	4,000
North West	6,500
Southern	3,800
TOTAL	52,250

Source: Botswana Society (1992, p. 8).

TABLE 2: BREAKDOWN OF MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS IN BOTSWANA AND PERCENTAGES OF THOSE RESIDING IN REMOTE AREAS

Group names(s)	Total Population	Percentage
Tswana	900,000	0.4
Bakgalagadi (Kgalagari)	80,000	4.4
Mbanderu (Herero)	40,000	6.3
Mbukushu (Mpukushu)	18,000	8.8
Yei (Koba, Bayeyi)	31,000	5.8
Kalanga	110,000	2.2
Nama	1,500	46.6
Balala	1,500	60.0
Basarwa	45,120	74.5
Subiya	2,000	15.0
Europeans	18,000	0.6
Teti	600	33.3
Ndebele	1,000	0.9
Pedi	4,000	10.0

Source: *ibid.*, p. 10.

Table 1 also indicates that not all RADS are minority groups. In fact in 1992 there were more RADS outside Ghanzi and Kgalagadi whose combined RADS population was only 11,650; well below half that of the Central District whose number amounted to 25,000. The table below further confirms this view.

Data from Table 2 should be used with caution because all the figures are based on a combination of ethnographic observations, census data, and projections from the 1946 national census. The margin for error must thus be high. Table 2 indicates that although not all RADS are minority groups, the majority of these people are minority groups. Top of the list are the San (Basarwa in the Table), whose percentage of people residing in remote areas accounts for 74.5% in a total population of 45,120. The Nama have come second at 46.6%, followed by the Tetsi at 33%. The Tswana, on the other hand, have a minuscule 0.4% remote area dwelling population. But this is misleading in that by Tswana here is simply meant the so-called eight principal tribes. In fact, ethnic groups like the Pedi (with a RADS of 10.0) are historically, culturally and linguistically Tswana people.

The other thing to note is that not all RADS are poor peasants. According to a Circular Savingram issued to Council Secretaries and District Commissioners in 1985, the criterion for classifying remote area villages has little to do with the socio-economic and political characteristics of the RADS. Spatial distribution factors matter most. Thus remote areas are designated as places: (i) with a minimum of 200 people or 40 households, (ii) located not less than 15 kilometres from the nearest recognised village, and (iii) a length of occupancy of at least five years, consisting either of permanent settlement or periodic visiting of the same location (LG 3/1/1 XIV (34), 29 March, 1985). Thus in effect a fairly sizeable number of remote area settlements, some of which are not poor (e.g. some of the large cattle owning Herero, Mbukushu, Kgalagadi and Europeans), qualify for Government Assistance under RADS development programmes.

The 1978 RADP workshop spelt out the objectives of the Programme as follows;

- (i) Social services; extension of basic services like education, water, health and feeding schemes.
- (ii) Economic: access to land, water rights, and income-earning opportunities to RADS.
- (iii) Political/Legal: self reliance, reducing dependence, social integration and awareness of rights.

Three years later, at the second RADP workshop held at the Botswana Institute of Administration and Commerce from 12th to 23rd October, 1981, the incumbent Coordinator of the Programme

complained at length about "poor staffing" (it was revealed recently that the RADP never had more than 40 staff members; it has never been able to fill all its authorised positions and often has to rely on volunteer expatriate personnel (see Hitchcock and Holm, 1993). M.E. Giddie, the RADP coordinator, also decried the isolation of his development unit by Government departments and warned that "antagonism between RADP and other departments and divisions at district level" and "antagonism between the chief structures and the officers heading the unit" undermined the spirit of the Programme. In a frank admission of bureaucratic incompetence and failure Giddie posited that "the point I am making... is that not all of us have been vigorously pursuing the objectives of RADP and most of the time we preferred to pass the blame elsewhere and not face issues squarely." (RoB, 1982b, pp. 11-12).

The numerous progress reports delivered at the workshop provide a catalogue of both unsuccessful and "pipeline" projects all over the country. What is most astonishing, in the light of the RADP objectives outlined in 1978, all the "development projects" are essentially service-centred and there is not even a single production-based project reported. As for the politico-legal reforms envisaged in 1978, there was not even a single mention of the same at the 1981 workshop, or subsequent ones. A critical examination of the shape taken by the RADP in the early 1980s invariably leads one to the conclusion that by that time Government investment in unproductive ventures had become an established feature of rural development policy. This is evident in Table 3 below.

TABLE 3: DISTRICT BY DISTRICT DISBURSEMENT FUNDS UP TO 1981

District	Amount	Project
Kweneng	P1,670	Draught Power
	P14,290	Mobile Clinic Vehicle
Ghanzi	P87,700	Classrooms-Kitchen-Storeroom. Teachers Quarters and Others
Kgatleng	P3,100	Purchase of Bedding and Bedding for Khurutse Hostel
Ghanzi	P11,960	Purchase of Beds and Mattresses for Xanagas and Degar Primary
Schools Other	P5,000	Enger Consultancy - RADP Evaluation

Source: RoB (1981, p. 4).

Notes: Other projects submitted for funding and already approved in principle by the Ministry of Finance and Development in 1981 included the impending construction of a customary court office, school teachers quarters and a health post in the Central District; which was to be allocated P188,000. There was also some P33,450 approved for two hostels in Kweneng. The total amount of funds disbursed and funds requested thus amounted to P261,880.

Table 3 clearly demonstrates that the BDP Government equated infrastructural provision with development. The persistence of this perspective on rural development is puzzling to say the least. This is more so given the consensus in economics literature that the early 1980s was a turning point in the political economy of development in the country. The construction of basic physical infrastructure, especially under the Accelerated Rural Development Programme (ARDP) launched in 1973, was almost complete (Shrestha, 1986). By 1980 a macro-economic regime characterised by low inflation, a stable exchange rate, and balanced public budgets was already established (Danevad, 1995). The ARDP, implemented in 1973, at a cost of P21.2 million, compared to a total rural investment by the Government of only P8.8 million between the financial years 1960/61 and 1972/73, by and large failed to transform the rural sector of the economy radically. The politicians and state bureaucrats should have learnt from experience that it is not enough to put up infrastructure, and that what is essential is the need to ensure that the rural sector becomes viable and productive.

The critical questions that come to mind at this juncture are: Why was the Government replicating the experiences of the failed rural development trajectory of the 1970s in the 1980s? Why was a proportionate majority of the rural populace, not only left behind during the modernisation programmes of the 1970s, but also out of the main wave of overall development thrust of the 1980s? The next section addresses these issues.

6.2 Selective Involvement in the Economy: Distribution of Political Patronage

The evolution of a comprehensive policy framework for rural development in Botswana is closely associated with a wide ranging consultancy report that was published in the early 1970s (Chambers and Feldman, 1973). Since then the basic philosophy that has dominated official thinking on rural transformation has been one of persuasion rather than the initiation and effective execution of policies and programmes capable of promoting agrarian reforms profound enough to sustain rural institutional expansionism or large scale investment in human and physical capital.

In the 1980s an unprecedented number of policies and programmes emerged geared at re-addressing rural underdevelopment or more precisely ensuring that the drought epidemic of the 1980s did not disrupt the development process. Consequently, almost all rural development initiatives during this period were based on a "linking relief with development" philosophy. Rapid economic growth and the concomitant political confidence, arising from longevity in office and presiding over an ever expanding liquid economy, must also have played a part in encouraging the BDP Government to experiment with "empowerment" economic programmes (see RoB, 1982a). The eruption of the 1981 to 1988 drought thus provided a confident political elite with an opportunity to expand state presence in the rural sector as palliative measures were urgently needed to countervail the debilitating effects of drought.

Paradoxically, our analysis will also demonstrate that it was precisely these inclement climatic conditions that brought to light contradictions in the rural economy as the drought exposed the extent to which conditions in the rural sector had deteriorated. We shall see that this was particularly evident in the vulnerability of many households (vulnerability in this context refers to the capacity to manage shocks). We shall also see that the failure to re-direct resources from high potential to low potential areas, or from the less vulnerable to the more vulnerable social groups, in order to improve the asset-base and long-term security, of the RADS for instance, made the relief and rehabilitation exercises extremely expensive financially. The case of Botswana manifestly demonstrates that although investment in low potential areas may have lower social rates of return in the short term, in the long run this investment pattern is justifiable in that the costs of relief from natural visitations like drought, pests, animal diseases (to all of which Botswana is prone) can be reduced. This may also avert conflicts between residents of high potential areas and those from low potential areas; a recurrent phenomena in most of contemporary Africa (Buchan-Smith and Tlogelang, 1994).

In the 1980s the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and the Ministry of Local Government and Lands (MLGL), continued to lead the drive for rural modernisation. This is clear from the following programmes;

- Accelerated Land Development Programme (ALDEP): MOA
- Agricultural Extension Small Projects Programme(AE 10): MOA
- Service to Livestock Owners in Communal Areas (SLOCA): MOA
- Accelerated Rainfed Arable Programme (ARAP): MOA
- Local Government 17 (LG 17): MLGL and
- Accelerated Remote Area Development Programme (ARADP): MLGL.

An examination of the above projects indicate that in the 1980s a mass-based approach to agrarian transformation had emerged in Botswana. A most interesting feature of agricultural reforms in the 1980s is that they basically focused on the marginal nature of arable production; especially, the introduction of technical inputs into existing farming systems. This contrasted markedly with the agricultural programmes of the 1970s which were, by and large, driven by a compulsive desire to foster a cattlepost mentality in the rural sector.

a) ALDEP

When the idea of an ALDEP was first conceived in 1977, and reaffirmed at the eighth National District Development Conference in 1980, the objectives of the programmes signalled a radical departure from post-colonial agricultural policy orthodox. The ALDEP sought:

- (i) to increase arable production with a view to reducing the annual 20-40 percent food grain deficit and achieving self-sufficiency in the long run;
- (ii) to enhance rural development and welfare by raising arable incomes through improved productivity and to optimise income distribution by concentrating on smallholder development and
- (iii) to create productive and remunerative employment in the areas in a drive to avert rural-urban drift.

The ALDEP assisted farmers with the following on-farm investment packages: water catchment tanks, scotch carts, fertilizers, fencing material, plough planters, cultivators, harrows, donkeys and oxen (Ntseane, 1992). An ambitious programme, ALDEP targeted 60,000 to 70,000 small farmers at its inception. The latter were defined as smallholders ploughing less than ten hectares and owning less than forty herds of cattle (Arntzen, 1990). Official consensus was that the majority of these farmers lived in the communal areas of eastern Botswana and Ngamiland. According to National Development Plan 5 (RoB, 1980a), at least 30,000 to 35,000 households with no direct access whatsoever to draught power were to benefit from this programme. A further 30 percent of female-headed households throughout the country, characterised by shortages of labour, capital and draught power were also targeted.

The ALDEP was initially an incentive to small farmers in that it aimed at accelerating the acquisition of farming implements by offering a subsidy of 30 percent of the initial cost, with the balance coming as a loan. This loan was repayable over a five year period at 8 percent per annum. The lending institutions were the National Development Bank and the Botswana Cooperative Bank. The latter was closer to farmers as its on-lending facilities were deployed in 30 co-operative societies around the country. District Agricultural Officers (DAO) were charged with the responsibility of disbursing cash payments to small farmers under a complementary Destumping Scheme. The donkey draught subsidy was even more generous at 50 percent and it required beneficiaries to possess no more than ten cattle. A fund allocation of P450 per farmer covered the fencing component of the programme.

What were the differential benefits to the small farmers of these agricultural subsidies? An evaluation of ALDEP in 1983 concluded that there was poor response from both male and female target farmers principally because poor peasants could not raise the deposit, or collateral in lieu, demanded by the lending institutions since ALDEP was a loan scheme (Molamu, 1992). Instead of addressing this problem the BDP Government, still canvassing for the impending national elections in 1984, succumbed to political pressure from big farmers, who alleged that ALDEP encouraged selective involvement in the economy, and shelved the matter. In 1985 it

introduced ARAP, as a complementary programme to ALDEP, in a bid to accommodate disgruntled farmers by enlarging the target groups.

The introduction of ARAP is indicative of the idiosyncratic behaviour of the Botswana political elite when confronted with conflicting demands of *realpolitik*. The formulation and implementation of the programme was not preceded by any consultation or pilot projects as was the case with TGLP and ALDEP for instance. Everything was carried out by high level Government fiat and most members of the MOA first heard about the programme on the state-owned radio station, *Seromamowa Sa Botswana*, a fate that had hitherto been the exclusive agony of the ordinary Motswana. Under ARAP, farmers were paid P50 (approximately US\$20) per hectare for every hectare ploughed up to ten hectares. Additional funds were made available for destumping, weeding, fertilizers and a planter. When ARAP was finally abandoned in 1991 farmers were getting P70 for each hectare ploughed up to seven hectare. In spite of the fact that ARAP's share of total non-recurrent drought expenditures increased from 25 percent in the financial year 1985/1986 to an estimated 48 percent in 1988/1989 (Valentine, 1993a), the programme was underutilised by poorer households (Solway, 1994a and Danevad, 1995).

Agricultural statistics (see Table 4 below) show that these subsidies schemes promoted agricultural extensiveness (the amount of land brought under cultivation for crop production) but not agricultural intensiveness (improved productivity per unit or land). They thus turned out to be poor incentives for change and development. This is disturbing for, although the value of arable production is much lower than that of livestock in Botswana, the majority of the rural peasantry is involved in crop production and regard this as the single most important productive economic activity.

The introduction of technical inputs in the rural economy through mass-based agricultural extension did not make the 1980s a better decade than the 1970s. This is evident from the figures in Table 4. Good rains in 1988 increased production but the discriminatory expenditure patterns in favour of wealthy farmers like the ARAP, initially intended as a one year project but lasting for six years - remained firmly in place. Meanwhile the problem of poverty in the rural areas worsened as the majority of the most vulnerable households in the rural sector experienced irreversible decline in the face of the persistent absence of appropriate counter-cyclical measures. Table 5 shows how rural development policies have had a minimal impact on relative poverty.

TABLE 4: CROP PRODUCTION OVER YEARS (metric tonnes)

YEAR	Sorghum	Maize	Millet	Beans	TOTAL
1970	7,800	2,100	1,330	na	11,230
1971	73,300	16,600	3,658	na	93,558
1972	68,600	10,300	6,000	na	84,900
1973	10,300	22,300	400	na	33,000
1974	72,300	33,900	na	na	106,200
1975	33,800	28,700	na	na	62,500
1976	55,500	62,600	na	na	118,100
1977	na	na	na	na	na
1978	15,500	14,000	2,500	na	32,000
1979	5,000	3,000	1,000	1,000	10,000
1980	29,000	12,000	3,000	2,000	46,000
1981	28,000	22,000	2,000	3,000	55,000
1982	4,000	13,000	500	500	18,000
1983	5,000	9,000	500	300	14,000
1984	6,000	500	700	400	7,000
1985	15,000	1,500	1,500	400	18,780
1986	16,000	3,600	3,600	600	21,500
1987	18,000	3,300	3,300	100	21,500
1988	94,000	7,300	7,300	2,300	107,300
1989	53,000	20,000	20,000	2,500	77,500

Source: Central Statistics Office, *Agricultural Statistics* (various years).

TABLE 5: Percentage Population Living Below Poverty Datum Line (1974, 1989)

% of Households		% of the Rural Population	
1974	1989	1974	1989
45	55	51	64

Source: Botswana Society (1992, p. 210).

The persistent problem of structural poverty in Botswana is reflected in Table 5. While the national percentage of households living below the PDL increased from 45% in 1974 to 55% in 1989, the percentage of rural households living below PDL increased from 51% to 64% in the same period. A recent study also indicates that in the early 1990s 40% of rural households were dependent on private remittances by relatives in addition to public transfer entitlements. Even Government publications reveal low levels of employment opportunities in the formal agricultural sector, inconsequential adoption of farming techniques, and stagnant productivity in the livestock sub-sector (RoB, 1991d, Table A2). The new Agricultural Policy unveiled in 1991 does not reflect any departure from the previous approaches. The Government still perceives its role in the rural economy as one of providing "necessary services and infrastructure for efficient agricultural production" (RoB, 1991e, p. 6). But who suffers most from these apparent adverse secular trends in the rural economy? To answer this vexing question we need to return to the RADs.

6.3 The Unholy Alliance: Politicians, Bureaucrats, Drought and the RADs

The true extent of rural underdevelopment in Botswana became apparent during the 1981/82 to 1987/88 drought crisis. It was during this time that a sizeable amount of mining cash-income was continually diverted to various public welfare programmes. The Drought Relief Programme (DRP) turned out to be a very expensive welfare package. In an effort to provide safety-net support for rural households, the DRP was officially designated to:

- (i) contribute to nutritional welfare and health;
- (ii) prevent income erosion by supporting the income-maintenance strategies of rural households;
- iii) prevent "whole family" migration(s) from low potential areas;
- iv) facilitate immediate return to farming when the rains resumed;
- v) maintain and expand employment opportunities; and
- vi) contribute to maintain and expand investments at the household, community and national levels (Hay, 1988).

There were eight components to DRP, viz; a supplementary feeding programme, a labour based relief programme (public works), handstamping (manual grinding of grain for school feeding), the ARAP, livestock feeding subsidy, provisioning livestock vaccines, a borehole subsidy and loan write-offs by the NDB (Buchan-Smith and Tlogelang, 1994).

According to official statistics, relief measures escalated during this period and US\$200 million was spent on DRP between 1982 and 1990 (RoB, 1991d). The RDP accounted for 14 to 18 percent of total Government expenditure between 1984 and 1987, costing over US\$50 million at its peak in 1987/1988 alone (cf Buchan-Smith and Tlogelang, 1994). Table 6, however,

demonstrates that the rising levels of dependence on welfare transfers between 1979 and 1988 were much higher than the amount provided by Government sources.

TABLE 6: Government Drought Relief and ARAP Expenditures (in million of Pula)

	1979- 1980	1980- 1981	1981- 1982	1982- 1983	1983- 1984	1984- 1985	1985- 1986	1986- 1987	1987- 1988
Rainfall of previous year:									
Arable areas	-26%	+7%	+28%	-16%	-18%	-21%	-38%	-34%	-19%
Full drought programme:									
DRP									
Food and Work	2.03	1.61	0.62	4.22	8.60	18.75	17.70	14.09	25.97
IFP* or FRD+	0.30	1.61	0.56	2.87	2.27	3.56	2.58	5.69	5.16
Recurrent Expenditure	1.02	1.07	0.36	1.19	3.35	11.53	14.80	16.44	27.24
Agriculture & Water Subtotal	3.35	3.11	1.54	8.28	14.22	33.84	35.08	36.22	58.37
ARAP	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11.81	26.30	35.20
Total with ARAP	3.35	3.11	1.54	8.27	14.22	33.84	46.89	62.52	93.56
Total non-recurrent drought expenditures	3.05	2.67	0.98	5.41	11.95	30.29	44.31	56.83	88.40

Source: Valentine (1993a, p. 118).

*International Food Programme
+Food Resources Department.

The data presented in Table 6 indicate that some P237.19 million was spent on drought relief measures between the financial years 1982/1983 and 1987/1988. This was equivalent to 14% of total Government development expenditure for the same period. It should be noted that a significant burden for expenditure on DRP also fell on local donors and foreign aid sources.

The extent of rural poverty becomes even more poignant when one considers the fact that in the mid-1980s more than 60% of the national population were direct recipients of food relief (RoB, 1989). As a matter of fact the number of registered destitutes receiving monthly Government allowance doubled between 1984 and 1988. By 1990 the number of official destitutes equalled the number of employees in the mining sector; an industry that accounted for 80% of the country's export earnings in the same year.

Thus in spite of its much publicised "relief through development" strategy, the RDP in effect masked deepening problems of structural poverty and unemployment in the rural economy. A labour survey in 1984/1985 showed average unemployment rates in the rural areas of 23.5% for men, and 27.4% for women (CSO, 1985). The "instruments effects" (i.e regular effects that are not necessarily part of the articulated goals of a development project) were well pronounced in the RDP. The institutional capacity of the state in Botswana to prevent famine is well-documented (Dreze, 1990; Hay, 1988 and Valentine, 1993a, 1993b). But one aspect that has hitherto received no attention is the manner by which the state, through the administration of DRP, produced greater possibilities of exercising power over the target groups. A research survey by the Democracy Monitoring Project of the University of Botswana in 1988 found that over two-thirds of the respondents singled out the DRP as the sole reason for their support of the ruling BDP (Somolekae, 1989).

It is estimated that almost all RADs (plus approximately 65% of the remaining rural households) relied on RDP for survival between 1982 and 1990. In 1992 there were 52,250 RADs in seven of Botswana's ten districts (see Table 1 above). These RADs have gradually been drifting into specially gazetted settlements and are dependent on public entitlement. To these people, emergencies like drought are easily exacerbated into a kind of permanent crisis. While Government policy is that development, in a drought prone country like Botswana, should drive relief, poor peasants like RADs find themselves in a situation whereby drought relief measures are manifestly designed to drive development: two diametrically opposed development trajectories for a common citizenry.

In most African countries drought relief programmes are characterised by conflicts arising from the need, in the absence of alternative mechanisms for denial, by state officials to recognise and acknowledge the realities of rural poverty. But in Botswana it has been politically expedient to put mining revenue into poverty alleviation, through the DRP: after 1990 most DRP programmes were retained and turned into quasi-permanent welfare schemes popularly known as *Namolo*. The analysis above indicates that the Government still has to invest in "drought-proofing" the agricultural sector to protect vulnerable households; against both the immediate shocks of low production and the impact of higher food prices (or deteriorating terms of trade between food and what the RADs themselves sell e.g labour and animals). This observation, however, takes us back to the question posed at the opening sections of this chapter; namely, who is responsible for the welfare predicament of poor peasants in Botswana?

How then did the state manage to hold the peasantry and to a lesser extent, its urban based ancillary; viz, the workers, in a state of "happiness and contentment"? We unequivocally suggest here that the state, through a process of trial and error, managed to appease peasant anger and

dissension through depoliticisation. We argue that the modus operandi of Botswana's post-colonial exclusionary politics is conditioned by six factors:

- i) the presentation of popular participation as an instrument of bureaucratic domination of the village modernisation process;
- ii) the pursuit of an aggressive cultural assimilation policy which ensures that various ethnic groups, especially minority cultural groups, do not exit from state authority by mobilising their resentment into a broad political coalition;
- iii) the promotion of a perception among the peasants that the modern nation state, like its erstwhile kgotla-based tribal entities, is the omnipotent council to which all inevitably appeal for welfare and deliverance;
- iv) emasculation of civil society;
- v) institutional and ideological timidity, and
- vi) sustained campaigns against politicised migrant labour returnees.

We proceed below to elaborate these hypotheses with the intention of demonstrating how the organisation of political conflict in Botswana has had a pervasive influence on rural development.

6.4 Depoliticisation and a Peasantry Under Stress

(a) Popular Participation and Bureaucratic Control

Development literature on African politics and governance, reflecting the growing concern with stability and economic development, focuses extensively on aspects of either state consolidation or deterioration (Chazan and Rothschild, 1988). Serious debates have been raised about the class behaviour of the post-independence bureaucratic elite. Central to these debates is the vexing issue of whose interests are served by the post-colonial developmental models. In some literature on rural development, state-led social engineering has been heavily criticised (Hyden, 1980). Sahn and Sarris (1994), in their study of the evolution of states, markets and civil institutions in rural Africa, have reached the following conclusions.

First, they observe that the unresolved contradictions between the indigenous rural institutions, which evolved in response to the political economy of rural modernisation in the post-colonial period and the inherited colonial rural administrative structures are the root cause of the present crisis in the African rural economy. Second, whereas in most regions of the world, political power and the nature of the state emanated from private accumulation of wealth, in post-independence Africa the state has been the principal mechanism of creating and maintaining political power as well as wealth. In the process of so doing the state assumed a predatory role that reached and surpassed its limits in extracting surplus from the rural economy (*ibid.*).

Participation in the political economy of development can manifest itself through several forms. In economics one of the most known forms of participation is that of "exit" and "voice" in the industrial firm (Hirschmann, 1979). In African social science an analogy drawn from this model has given rise to a model of "incorporation" and "disengagement" (Azarya, 1988, pp. 3-9). Incorporation occurs when the state achieves the capacity to use its power to penetrate society. This is done by encouraging a large segment of the population to take part in its activities in order to share in the natural resources of the country. Disengagement is an "exit function" whereby people detach themselves from the state by moving away from its cash nexus to a sub-economy with the objective of either subverting Government policies or changing them.

State-society relations in Botswana are notoriously difficult to define. This is largely because contemporary local mainstream intellectual discourse has excised politics from both development theory and contextual economic analysis. This trend, however, is not only confined to Botswana (see Leftwich, 1995). Whitehead (1993), a renowned Latin Americanist, rightly exhorts economists to be aware that political factors in contemporary societies powerfully shape economic agendas and outcomes. After independence, the BDP Government adopted a conscious policy towards rural development. But this was done in a very haphazard fashion and more with a political motive as illustrated in the previous chapter.

The major problem with Botswana's rural development programmes, both as policy and process, is that they were, and still are, dominated by a paternalistic rather than a participatory approach to community-based development. As clearly stated in the second National Development Plan, the BDP Government's rural development approach was:

concerned with teaching the people in villages and townships to prepare themselves for change, to welcome it and benefit from it (RoB, 1970, Part 1, p. 114).

This "spoon-feeding" approach to rural development was carried out through the skilful use of mobilisation instruments ranging from hybrid institutions like district councils, land boards, village development committees to the more broad based national commissions and radio campaigns. All these helped to entrench bureaucratic control of rural development institutions thus turning them into elite agents of change instead of instruments capable of generating mass influence in community decisions. A detailed analysis of this hypothesis is the subject of Chapter 3 of this thesis and, therefore, need not detain us here.

(b) Cultural Domination

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the majority of Batswana belong to the so-called eight principal Setswana-speaking tribes; namely, the Bamangwato, Bakgatla, Bakwena, Barolong, Balete, Batawana, Batlokwa and Bangwaketse. These are the only ethnic groups that are

constitutionally recognised as distinctive entities even though there are well over fifteen tribes in the country (Campbell and Tlou, 1984). The BDP Government has over the years reinforced a dictatorial concept of relative cultural homogeneity by stubbornly refusing to acknowledge the constitutional rights of the so-called minority tribes. This was achieved through the refusal to use non-Setswana languages in schools, over the state-owned radio, or in Government publications and records (Molutsi, 1989).

The most extreme form of this aggression often bordered on absurdity. A perfect example of this was the frequently recorded denial of group identities and the use of patron-client networks to punish dissenters (Solway, 1994a, 1994b and Hitchcock and Holm, 1993). Although many non-Setswana speakers resent this cultural domination, the tendency has been to exist within establishment political structures since a viable alternative system has never evolved.

(c) Pseudo-Welfarism and Dependence Culture

The BDP Government has proved adept in using the machinery of the state for purposes of patronage. Besides the appointment of favoured persons to positions of responsibility in line with its own opinions, preferences and interests, the ruling party has also used transfer entitlements, income distribution and drought relief programmes to promote political entrenchment. Through the use of drought relief programmes, land allocations and income entitlements for the poor and remote area dwellers, the Government has managed to cultivate a culture of dependence which continues to guarantee the ruling party the rural vote. However, it has been established independently that this politically motivated pseudo-welfarism has led to a failure to develop financial responsibility among both rural development institutions and individual consumers (Shrestha, 1986).

(d) Emasculation of Civil Society

State formation and civil society in western Europe evolved simultaneously and in many ways shaped one another (Findlay, 1991). Although civil society has become an accepted aspect of democratic culture, there are still conceptual difficulties in its interpretations and the logic of collective action in the pursuit of more optimal individual payoffs (Olson, 1965). It is theoretically believed that civil society comprises those organisations and institutions in the contemporary social order which are separate from, and find expression in, their relationship to the state (Healy and Robinson, 1992). Often called interest groups, these organisations and institutions always attempt to influence the direction of Government policy without necessarily seeking political office.

A distinction is often made between "insider groups" and "outsider" ones. The former are those groups like companies and intellectual institutions which are regularly consulted by policy

makers. The latter are those groups which only struggle to influence the political agenda. Healy and Robinson (1992) make the point that in plural societies, the distinction is also made between groups, like farmers and trade unions, which defend particular sectional interests, and pressure groups which seek to promote specific political causes. In some LDCs, another distinction is often drawn between traditional interest groups based on ascriptive status and modern interest groups with mainly economic or class foundations.

In the wake of current liberal revivalism, there is a raging debate on how the interwoven, and often conflictual, relationship between the state and civil society impacts on development. It has been suggested that Botswana's developmental experience attests to the axiom that positive state-society relations are a pre-requisite for sustained development (Holm and Molutsi, 1989). This conclusion, however, is not only ahistorical but decidedly ideological. The truth is that the state in Botswana has not felt compelled to build a normative consensus for its authority, particularly with the majority peasant population who are merely used as voting fodder. An ensemble of minority pressure groups which emerged in the last couple of years has also failed to endear itself to the state (Somolekae, 1989).

A political system has emerged in the country whereby a dominant political elite has free reign in pursuit of "progressive", "mobilising", or "stabilising" developmental objectives as is so evident in the BDP political rhetoric, its economic track record and Government publications. Government opposition to autonomous social mobilisation outside established and partisan political structure is more of a norm than an exception. The monopolistic hold by the state on the media continues to facilitate BDP propagandistic campaigns to the detriment of the civil society agendas. The working class is numerically small, badly educated, disorganised, poorly paid and lacks an authentic working class organisation (Parson, 1980).

(e) Management of the Opposition

Although Botswana is a multi-party state, the opposition is very weak. Wiseman, in an interesting study of the structural organisation of political conflict in Botswana, points out that one of the easiest observations to make concerning political change in post-independence sub-saharan Africa is to recognise the ephemeral nature of the multi-party system in the vast majority of continental states. Botswana on the other hand maintained a stable Government system against a background of considerable economic growth. In fact multi-partyism in Botswana is far from being ephemeral. The prediction that the prolonged institutionalisation of the play and fair rules of the democratic system, minimal organised interest group activity, the abridgement of traditional political rights, and the overflow of South African racial turmoil would eventually give the military a dominant political position have not been vindicated (Holm, 1987).

However, it is politically and theoretically naive to assume that the mere presence of several opposition parties is a true reflection of multi-partyist liberal democracy. A political system in which a dominant political party exercises tremendous control over the operations of the opposition, as is the case in Botswana, is nothing short of a de facto single party state and, therefore, "quasi-democratic." The ruling party has over the years consistently used institutional support structures developed by a liquid economy, including academic institutions and parastatal enterprises, to foster opposition management. For instance it is against the law in Botswana for the opposition parties to accept foreign funding even though research clearly indicates that such funds are a critical factor affecting electoral outcomes in the country (Holm and Molutsi, 1989). The ruling party also unobtrusively relies on the state treasury to promote its political campaigns (*ibid.*).

Another tactic used by the BDP to manage the intellectually dominated opposition political parties, especially the more articulate left-centrist Botswana National Front (BNF) which currently leads the opposition in parliament, has been its, often terribly embarrassing, partiality to ideological timidity. At the official opening of the 1980 Southern African Social Science conference (SASSC), the Assistant Minister of Agriculture, Utlwanang Matlhabaphiri (former High Commissioner to Britain), argued that "we build, increase wealth, not ideology" (BDN, 1980). The thrust of the distinguished Minister's address was that the BDP philosophy was merely to "build a nation" and "increasing wealth rather than... developing a comprehensive ideological position" and "changing the country to fit that position" (*ibid.*). In an amazing fit of unwitting self-parody and contradiction, Matlhabaphiri further said that:

... this is not to say we are lacking in ideology... Ideology is what we do as well as what we say. I am happy that our non-ideological ideology is appropriate for us at the present stage of development. (*ibid.*, p. 1).

Some social scientists may conclude that this statement, seemingly contradictory and full of equivocation, simply reflects the political idiosyncrasies of an individual. That conclusion is wrong. The above statement is a clear manifestation of the ideological timidity that has over the years given the BDP party cadres licence to avoid, at all costs, public debates on critical issues like resource and income distribution along any clear ideological lines.

As the World Bank (1984) vaguely, but proudly, puts it the Government's political ideology is "development". Matlhabaphiri called it, rather bombastically, "pragmatic professionalism" (BDN, 1980). This ideological aversion inevitably leads to the opposition parties, especially the leftist BNF which has gained marginal support over the years (1), embarking on frustrating political monologues which do not appeal to the mostly illiterate electorate who prefer to live with the master they know rather than venturing into the unknown.

(f) Labour Export Policy and Botswana Politics

Throughout the colonial period, labour export was a crucial feature of the development policy in Botswana as the evidence in Chapter 2 of this thesis demonstrates. This phenomenon transcended the colonial period and, up until the late 1980s, it had a tremendous impact on the internal dynamics of both the development process and political outcomes. After independence labour policy in Botswana became more oriented towards internal development as a result of the rapid expansion of the national economy. In effect, labour migrants in South Africa became less important for the national economy as a whole. However, for the rural poor and the less educated section of the population, dependence on South African jobs proportionately increased in the same period as mine wages across the border started increasing considerably from the late 1970s (Paton, 1995).

This continued dependence by the peasants on the South African labour market was in essence a reflection of the glaring fact that local rural alternatives in Botswana were in continuous decline. This problem was compounded by the fact that the country continued to depend on surface mining and the cattle industry neither of which is labour-intensive. Nevertheless, the new unemployment moved to the sprawling emergent mining cities where discontent and disillusionment played into the hands of the opposition thus creating a broad base for opposition politics (*ibid.*). In a surprising move the BDP Government sought to contain this situation and retain political supremacy, not by initiating viable rural alternatives to unemployment but by exploiting the South African labour market for political purposes at home.

Paton (1995) observes that, confronted with rapid economic growth "characterised by underindustrialisation and increasingly stratified distribution of the benefits of growth" (p. 287), the BDP, realising that support for the opposition parties was strongest among the infant but growing working class, sought to "preserve a patriarchal rural society" since the ruling party "still had very patriarchal foundations" (p. 288). The labour export policy deliberately, and sometimes very embarrassingly, pursued by the ruling party, served this purpose well. It is common knowledge in Botswana that ex-migrants are more politicised than the average Botswana. Furthermore, re-employment of labour returnees is compounded by the fact that skills acquired by them abroad are mostly inapplicable in Botswana. The BDP exploited this to political advantage by effectively entrenching a fundamental passivity regarding labour outflows (*ibid.*).

For instance, the Botswana Employment Act of 1981 permitted employers abroad to engage Botswana immigrant workers for a shocking period of two years and nine months. It also denied such workers the right to terminate their contracts unilaterally while their employers were free to do so. It is amazing to realise that this obnoxious piece of legislation was enacted at a time when employers within Botswana were actually campaigning for a reduction of the number of experienced farm workers away (*ibid.*). The message was clear; the ruling party would remain

averse to any increase in the number of returnee workers so long as this helped avoid the politicisation of the rural populace and deprived the opposition of a potential political base.

To demonstrate the impact of these political manoeuvres on the rural economy in general and the peasantry in particular we need to address the issue of distribution inequalities and social differentiation in the post-colonial period. We have emphasised the extent to which the dominant political elite in Botswana interpreted rural development in terms of its reflection on their policies and agendas. Now we turn to an examination of how this partisan interpretation of rural development, both as policy and process, has impacted upon the rural economy.

6.5 RADs: Entitlement Politics and the Power of the Ballot Box

(a) Agricultural Input Subsidisation: Underlying Assumptions

A close examination of the mass-based approach to agricultural commercialisation in Botswana in the 1980s reflects several assumptions underlying public policy. First, a careful examination of the objectives behind these numerous agricultural and pastoral policies indicate that the official consensus within Government structures and policy makers was that rural poverty alleviation, through income generating activities, and the reversal of the rural underemployment spiral, could only be achieved through the external agency of the state and not by a dynamism internal to the rural economy. This supposition is evident in the rapid increase in all sorts of subsidies and transfers to rural households from the central Government. Table 7 below illustrates the magnitude of public entitlements between 1982 and 1988.

Second, it was assumed that agricultural input growth would not only stimulate but also improve agricultural output growth; an assumption since invalidated by empirical evidence (see Table 4). Finally, there was a basic philosophy that a large expansion of rural development schemes, with explicit distributive concerns, like special schemes for identifiable target groups, would provide evidence of the workings of the contemporary development model leading to enhanced electoral support for the establishment. Ironically, it never occurred to the bureaucratic cadre and the political elite of the time that the very circumstances that gave rise to the subsidisation fever of the 1980s were inextricably intertwined with the inadequacies of the post-independence development model.

Agricultural policies like ALDEP, which initially aimed at reaching some 60,000 to 70,000 odd small arable landholding households, with less than 10 hectares of land owning 40 or less herds of cattle, a section of the population that constituted approximately 70% of all crop farmers in the country (Bank of Botswana, 1985), were based on the presumption that small farm bias in agrarian development policy would lead to high productivity: a hypothesis popular

in contemporary political economy of agriculture, but currently a highly contested academic terrain (Lipton, 1968, 1977; Griffin, 1989 and Dyer, 1991). The small farm bias strategy actually failed in Botswana largely because it was not seriously tried.

TABLE 7: DISTRIBUTION OF ALDEP ON-FARM PACKAGES (1982/1988)

Package	No. Distributed	% of Total Packages
Draught Power		
Donkeys	2,805	9.3
Oxen	663	2.2
Total	3,469	11.5
Implements		
Plough	13,716	45.7
Planter	1,568	5.2
Cultivator/Harrow	846	2.8
Total	16,130	53.7
Fencing	9,943	33.2
Water Tank	475	1.6
Total	30,016	100.0

Source: Srivastava (1989).

Be that as it may, there is evidence that while these agricultural schemes failed to benefit poor households, most of whom were consequently compelled by dire circumstances to rural-urban linkages, like migration and private remittances, to supplement public transfers, other development projects like FAP and ARAP provided accessibility of the burgeoning rural elite to the Government's normal gravy train. The latter did not only benefit from the externalities generated by expanded public expenditure on "neutral" investments like physical infrastructure (which provided greater mobility opportunities), but also got a greater share in electoral motivated largesse like the massive loan write-offs by the profligate NDB (see Chapter 4).

(b) Instruments and Talent Effects of Agricultural Subsidisation

The political economy of agriculture in the Third World is replete with instances whereby the goals of development policy, especially reforms driven by massive social engineering from above, collide with or are subverted by entrenched interests at the periphery. The results are often at most unintended or at worst a disjunction between the official policy prescription and the policy as it can be interpreted and applied at the lower administrative levels.

A typical example of such developments in Botswana is provided by both the formulation and execution of the Tribal Land Act, discussed above, and both ALDEP and ARAP. Rural development policies which homogenise recipient unit groups, like the target-group orientated agricultural policies in Botswana during the 1980s, are particularly prone to the corrosive influence of both instruments and talent effects; that is to say, they have a tendency to benefit the wrong people. For instance, some cattle barons and a considerable number of the urban-based salariat purchased both cattle and agricultural technical implements from those RADs, whose needs demanded immediate satisfaction, at prices ridiculously below their market value. The Government on its part capitalised on its extended presence in the rural economy by directly declaring war on those rural patronage networks that militated against progressive encroachment into the rural economy by the state. When a concerned academic confronted a MOA official with evidence that packages from some of the subsidisation schemes and the institutional patterns of their distribution undermined informal but productive rural based land and draught power sharing relations, the response was an unequivocally sharp and swift; "We want to liberate people from all those sorts of things" (Solway, 1994a, p. 491). The political motive behind this assertiveness was not only to use subsidies as a weapon against sharing arrangements that functioned independently of Government, and there beyond the ambit of the Orwellian "Big Brother" (or development apparatus), but also to institute a permanent dependence on the state by all rural production units in a bid to expand the BDP electoral base. In other words, dependence on own produced wealth, by whatever means necessary, has been progressively replaced by dependence on the state.

The instruments and talent effects of these agricultural policies are likely to have far-reaching consequences for rural development. Unfortunately the continuing tendency by the Botswana Government only to measure distribution through the collation of household survey information, for example the RIDS (1974/1975) and the more recent HIES (1985/1986), at the exclusion of economically active persons and individual recipient units in the rural sector, makes it very difficult to attempt a more accurate analysis of the effects of state structures and the working of the economy on real income inequalities and the standards of living.

However, economic, political and social factors accounting for disparities of income in the rural sector are evident. In the economic sphere productivity and employment are lower in agriculture compared with other sectors of the economy (Buchan-Smith and Tlogelang, 1994). The progressivity of public expenditure is skewed towards neutral expenditure (i.e. expenditure which is neither progressive nor regressive e.g; mining, trade, tourism etc.) and regressive expenditure (e.g; higher education). At the social level, social groups like RADs who have extremely limited access to basic services, and are dependent on state benevolence, are effectively deprived of the solidarity that lie behind transfers which lead to a private redistribution between urban-rural sectors; namely, remittances made by migrants for the subsistence of spouses and relatives left behind in the village thus initiating opportunities

of commoditisation of agricultural produce; assistance to new migrants or unemployed workers by families receiving them in town and finally assistance rendered to country folk by relatives established in towns: all these are effective means of reducing the financial burden on the rural household and promoting accumulation. But the RADs without education and permanently resident in the marginal fringes of the booming "urban environment" have no access to such opportunities for self-advancement.

(c) Politics and the RADs: a Contextual Analysis

Political change and development in Botswana was characterised by a competitive party system and regular elections, held after every five consecutive years, in the thirty years preceding 1996. Political literature demonstrates the resilience of two strands in the debates about the relationship between political democracy and economic development in the last thirty years of self-governance in the country. On the one hand there those who see political participation and economic development as mutually reinforcing (Harvey and Lewis, 1990). Other social scientists strenuously argue that the Botswana polity is characterised by considerable authoritarianism, focus on the extensive powers of the presidency and premised upon a hierarchical and highly inequitable society (Danevad, 1992 and Good, 1993, 1994, and 1996).

In this debate, however, the explicit nature of democracy is not clearly specified, and as is the general case with such political studies in most Third World countries, the key political features under investigation invariably centre on the extent to which the political system is inclusive or exclusive in its approach; that is, the debates are based on the polar extremes of whether the political system seeks to activate, or not, a wide range of "voices" in national politics. These historiographical differences mirror the wider argument between liberal revivalists and developmentalists in contemporary Third World academia. For example, the liberalisation perspective is well articulated by those who discern elements of reciprocity and accountability between the state and civil society (Holm and Molutsi, 1989). Developmentalists have tried to demonstrate how the evolution of an authority structure, dominated by a small but efficient administrative-bureaucratic elite, empowered the state with the capacity to direct energies of various social groups towards collective economic goals (Charlton, 1991 and 1994).

Both of these traditions undeniably have strong explanatory powers but, by studying the nature of democracy in Botswana and its impact on economic development over the last thirty years from above and putting a lot of emphasis on institutional innovation and application, they ignore the important aspect of *democratic responsiveness*. In other words they leave out the electorate whose responsiveness to institutionalised democratic culture and practice should be an important measure of the state's ability to broaden the sphere of citizenship. The

"democratic responsiveness perspective", in conjunction with the "compatibility/conflict perspectives" discussed above, is invaluable when it comes to discussions of policy issues in terms of how each sector can best serve developmental objectives, or indeed the state. A grassroots or group-orientated approach to political participation; especially the electoral behaviour of groups like RADs, women's organisations, minority ethnic groups etc etc, has the added advantage of according the scholar an opportunity to assess patterns of incorporation and disengagement over time thus affirming, or denying, the legitimacy of the state over specific historical junctures.

6.6 Governance and Democratic Response

The consistent occurrence of competitive national elections in Botswana provides a useful measure of political democracy and economic performance.

TABLE 8: RESULTS OF ELECTIONS, % OF VOTES CAST (1969-1994).

Party	Election Year					
	1969	1974	1979	1984	1989	1994
BDP	68.3	76.6	75.2	67.9	68.8	54.6
BNF	13.3	11.5	13.0	20.6	27.0	27.1
BPP	12.1	6.6	7.4	6.6	4.3	4.1
BIP	6.0	4.8	4.2	3.2	2.4	na
BPU				1.3	0.9	1.0
BFP					0.5	na
BLP					0.02	0.01
IFP						2.7
UDF						0.3
USF						0.1
LLB						0.1
Total No. of Votes	76,858	64,011	134,496	227,032	250,487	283,375

Source: RoB (1984, 1990b and 1994b)

The first critical thing to note about Table 8 is the progressive proliferation of political parties, not only since independence, but also the intensification of this development in the 1980s. Of course, there are many ways of explaining this historical phenomena. Some commentators have attributed it to the relative ease with which a new party can be registered in Botswana.

Others have countered this argument by equally pointing out institutional requisites like the fact that political participation is inaccessible to the illiterates since English is the official language in which parliamentary business is conducted and Government records published. Both arguments have their merits. Bureaucratic red tape, institutional support, finance and cultural factors are crucial determinants of political participation in Botswana.

But adherence to this "cyclical argument" serves no analytical purpose. We intend here to take a more dynamic empirical approach. The argument is that the existence of numerous political parties does not in itself explain political democracy for development *per se*. The reality is that political parties have historically been known to have the capacity to emerge in most geopolitical environments regardless of prevailing regime types. The best way to understand the contextual nature of political participation is to concentrate analysis on the societal composition of various political parties and examine the extent to which they achieve and preserve those goals and values upon which lies the fabric of their collective consciousness.

Table 8 indicates that seven political parties emerged in the 1980s and 1990s, a period that witnessed the post-colonial development model experiencing serious crisis, as opposed to only four parties in the 1960s and the 1970s. Political studies have demonstrated that in the latter period there were hardly any differences between the BDP and opposition parties. Ethnic consciousness was the principal political organisational principle. Political issues were localised even though all the four political parties derived from an elite with remarkably similar, intellectual, professional and socio-historical backgrounds (Holm, 1972). Generally, opposition parties had no political agendas of substance and many regarded their role as that of advising the Government of the day: the seizure of political power was anathematised (Holm, 1972; Wiseman, 1977 and Nengwenkulu, 1979). Detailed studies of political elites' aspirations, party organisation, cross-party development priorities, parliamentary speeches and local council motions demonstrated that political affiliation did not have any value in predicting policy positions (MacCartney, 1978 and Cohen, 1979).

These findings are surprising given the distribution inequalities of the same period - discussed in this and the previous chapters. Throughout the 1970s, ethnic loyalties remained more paramount in dictating both individual and collective political behaviour than ideologies - save for rhetorical differences between the Marxist-Leninist BNF and the BDP (Polhemus, 1983). The 1980s and 1990s, on other hand, experienced an unprecedented upsurge of political activity. Extensive research and annual publications of political anthologies by the Democracy Research Project team of the University of Botswana; on democratic theory, political manifestos, profiles of politicians, electoral outcomes etc etc, now accords us a chance to put the issues surrounding democratic practice and development experience in Botswana into perspective.

Table 8 shows the slow but gradual erosion of political support for the BDP since the early 1980s and the corresponding political ascendancy of the BNF. Between 1984 and 1994 support for the BDP fell from 67.9% to 54.6%. During the same period the opposition BNF gained more popularity raising the percentage of votes cast for it from 20.6% to 37.1%. This achievement is even more spectacular when one bears in mind that all the other opposition parties, with distinctive grassroots orientation, which emerged in the 1980s and 1990s are splinter groups from the BNF and not the BDP.

6.7 Grassroots Politics: Nation-Building or Destructive Nationalism?

The most potent force behind the political developments of the 1980s and the 1990s was the institutionalisation of grassroots politics in the Botswana body politic. A number of aggressively active and articulate civic and community group mushroomed during this period. The most vociferous of these movements were nationwide women's organisations: the Botswana Democracy Research team identified sixteen women organisations in operation in 1994 concerned with national issues like social welfare, discrimination against minority groups, legal reforms and the increasing human rights abuse in Botswana. The campaign by these groups, workers unions, RADs and opposition parties compelled a beleaguered BDP to highlight, for the first time, the political imperative for "mutual social responsibility" and also to admit that "vulnerable groups" were increasing in the last election manifesto (BDP, 1994).

The reality is that since the 1989 national elections, political participation by marginalised groups like RADs has become more pronounced at the local, national and international levels. The "politics of disenfranchisement" perpetuated by these social groups carry nationalist undercurrents that should be a matter of grave concern to any rational politician. The following examples attest to the reality of peasant resistance to establishment politics and the regime of stratified distribution.

(a) Herero Disillusionment and Irredentism

The Mbanderu (also called Herero) came to Botswana in 1904 as political refugees. Their flight was prompted by the German imperial policy of extermination in South West Africa (now independent Namibia) following the Nama/Herero uprising at the turn of the century. Historically, these people have always been pastoralists whose distinctive cultural rationale for cattle possession is spiritual (Vivelo, 1977). In Botswana they settled under the patronage of the Tswana-speaking Tawana tribe in the north western part of the country. Being industrious people, they extricated themselves from labourer and vassalage status and re-established themselves as renowned pastoralists around the ecologically fragile baseline of Lake Ngami. They were the first cattle herders to display strong hostility to the TGLP (RoB, 1975a).

Research also shows that they did not take kindly to the borehole technology of the colonial and post-independence period (Almagor, 1982). Their argument has always been that fragmentation of grazing grounds, would not only bring deleterious ecological disasters, but also undermine the traditional production units that made them a cohesive group with articulated interests. However, the Government did not consider their apprehensions seriously enough and the official view was that they were out to make trouble.

Table 1 above shows that there were 6,500 RADs in the North West district in 1992; a figure surpassed by Ghanzi and the Central districts only while Table 2 indicates that the percentage of RADs who were Herero in 1992 was 6.3% which contrasts sharply with 0.4% of RADs that were of Tswana stock. It is arguably this deteriorating economic situation that compelled them to launch an aggressive campaign for repatriation to Namibia. The intrusion of this irredentist nationalist element in Botswana politics, arising as it does from the cavalier fashion with which agricultural policy is conducted, may as well be a harbinger of worse developments in the future.

Meanwhile, there are serious economic and animal health problems arising from the Herero repatriation programme. Unregulated movement of cattle and people between Botswana and Namibia, compounded by the emotionally explosive war posturing between the two countries over Sedudu island, has contributed to technical problems associated with the control of cattle lung disease (Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia) in the area. Consequently, a wholesale slaughter of 250,000 herds of cattle has been ordered by Government decree (Mmegi Wa Dikgang, 24 April - 2 May, 1996:2). The slaughterhouse at Maun, the district headquarters, has been shut down and 200 employees retrenched. More cattle slaughter exercises are envisaged in the near future.

After the eradication of the cattle lung disease, the Government will have to provide 81,000 cattle in compensation to the farmers affected. This will obviously not replace all the stock lost and Botswana farmers are so incensed that they have made direct representation to President Masire, without any success so far. Baherero, on the other hand will not lose much since the MOA has already made it clear that 100% cash compensation is due to each farmer affected since they are on repatriation status. Small farmers will, as the experiences of the 1960-1965 drought and the foot and mouth disease epidemic of the 1970s indicated (see Chapter 3), suffer more as it usually takes longer to replenish their stock.

(b) Kgalagadi Politics: Secessionist Tendencies

Another feature of distributionist politics in contemporary Botswana is a growing sentiment of political disengagement among the marginalised communities. The nationalities question gained a new perspective as a result of the shift towards more pluralistic politics in the 1980s.

A basis for a new ethnic consciousness, born of collective deprivation, among smaller tribal groups like Kgalagadi emerged. This was a result of the realisation that their economic achievements, albeit minuscule, were resented by the dominant Tswana groups; and often insultingly attributed to outside assistance. In the 1989 elections an articulate Kgalagadi politician ran on a separatist ticket demanding autonomy for the western part of the Kweneng district. The Khoisan people, he argued, deserved a territory of their own where they can accumulate wealth like other Batswana and bequeath a social heritage to posterity (Solway, 1994b).

Secessionism is unlikely to succeed, of course, but such political developments are neither an aberration nor the indulgences of individual idiosyncratic pleasures. Rural underdevelopment and discrimination in the Ghanzi and Kgalagadi areas are real enough, and they have a strong national dimension. For instance, in the mid-1980s complaints were levelled against Chief Seepapitso of Bangwaketse, one of the so-called principal tribes, for inappropriately and unconstitutionally dabbling in local politics. President Masire, who comes from the same area, despatched an envoy in the person of assistant Minister of Local Government and Lands, one Mr Mothibamele, to investigate the said allegations. Incidentally, Mr Mothibamele comes from the Kgalagadi district. Upon arrival at the Royal Court (Kgotla) the cabinet minister was denied audience by the chief and his subjects. The chief expressed his bafflement in public and wondered, "How can the President send a Kgalagadi to speak to a chief?" (*ibid.*).

Chief Linchwe of Bakgatla was even more blunt at an August international conference convened by the Botswana Society on the theme, "Democracy in Botswana", when he stated in public that the RADs were not entitled to citizenship because in his opinion "they were chasing wild animals, picking wild berries, and digging for roots while we were developing invincible armies" (Wilmsen, 1988, p. 31, cited in Soloway, 1994b). This a clear example of the process whereby powerful ethnic groups mobilise around and valorise their primordial identities in order to stake a claim to political power and the accompanying trappings of wealth and glory.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This thesis has sought to present a critical analysis of the political economy of development in rural Botswana between 1966 and 1996. It has attempted to provide a critique of the post-independence developmental model. To this end, we have employed ideas and analytical perspectives from diverse disciplines like economics, political sociology, economic anthropology, political science and public administration. The justification for the use of such a multi-disciplinary approach is provided in Chapter One of the thesis and need not detain us here.

The analysis indicates that state-led and state-directed development has had profound effects for the country in general and the rural economy in particular. The BDP Government has adhered to development planning and multi-partyism to strengthen the drive for industrialisation in the country and broaden the set of beneficiaries, from a booming mineral sub-sector. Although the state ideology has always been to accumulate massive revenues from the mining sector and, subsequently, re-invest the proceeds in the poor rural sector, the development trajectory has consistently moved in the opposite direction i.e. benefitting the salariat-based urban economy and an enclave livestock sub-sector in the rural economy with strong ties to the centre. Consequently, income inequalities and entitlement failures have become characteristic features of the rural economy in general. Competitive democratic elections have so far failed to remedy the situation but current developments are such that the state is now under siege by both the economically active and powerful factors in the urban sector and the rural peasantry from whom the ruling party has always paradoxically received electoral support.

This thesis reveals that, in contrast to hitherto unchallenged projections of Botswana as a "success story" in Africa and a paragon of excellence, its development experience does not differ significantly from its counterparts in other African countries given the uniqueness provided by diamond reserves. We demonstrate in Chapters 3 and 4 that, like its mineral-rich contemporaries in Africa, the Botswana state squandered mineral wealth by using it as a mechanism for creating and maintaining political power. It also retained inherited political institutions like tribal authorities, albeit in the modified form of local Government structures, principally to promote a dominant patriarchal Tswana discourse that has been used for centuries to preserve distributional inequalities. At the intellectual level there was complete acceptance of conventional metropolitan social science and its ideological underpinnings but political expedience frequently demanded some "gerrymandering" and the Botswana State demonstrated considerable expertise at perfecting the latter into an art as suggested above.

The word "symbolism" is not a common term in the social sciences. However, it enjoys popular application in the humanities - especially in the area of literary criticism. The study of the policies of planning and policy-making in this thesis (see Chapters 2, 3 and 4) reveals how reliance on symbolic gestures has been the cornerstone of the BDP economic policy for the last thirty years. Social scientists have argued that administrative efficiency and economic rationality characterised the development model in Botswana between 1966 and 1996. The evidence provided herein paints a different picture. The Government never consciously adhered to any development model either to manage mineral wealth in the interests of the peasantry or to maintain a momentum for sustainable development in the future.

It has already been pointed out that planning was, and still is, used as an instrument to manage development and patterns of investment and expenditure. Consultation with the people is always projected as a way of promoting participation in the development and of promoting a democratic culture. But our analysis in Chapters 3 and 4 demonstrates that the views of ordinary people have consistently been ignored by the BDP Government. This is particularly true with respect to the introduction of TGLP. This symbolic gesture of "consultation without commitment" has hitherto been neglected by those researchers who trumpet the "exceptionality" of Botswana. Furthermore, the Botswana state uses pseudo-welfarist packages and a plethora of expensive but economically irrational "commissions of inquiry" whenever its development policies are exposed as anything else but a cover for class projects. The same methods have frequently been used to avoid making difficult political decisions like reducing distribution inequalities, paying compensation to politically weaker minority groups removed from their lands by Government land development programmes and addressing the persistent problem of rural underemployment and environmental degradation.

This profligacy and incompetence of the state was made possible by the liquidity of the economy. The present economic downswing is increasingly undermining the state's capacity to hold power over the peasantry and our discussion of electoral experiences in Botswana above indicate that the BDP may not be easily returned to office in the 1999 elections.

This thesis has argued, through an extensive use of, mostly, secondary sources the following:

- (a) That colonial development policy in the Bechuanaland Protectorate was neither designed to serve imperialist interests, represented by South Africa in the region, nor to preserve the "traditional" socio-economic status quo. From the 1930s, colonial development policy was progressive as reflected in continued heavy investment, by the colonial administration, in the cattle and beef industry, the economic boat of colonial Botswana.

- (b) Contrary to previous research findings, cattle and beef export did not always reflect geopolitical imperial interests. More often than not, the latent object of colonial development policy was to develop an export-led economy designed principally to promote the evolution of a middle class capable of providing political leadership in the post-independence period. To this end, historical sanctional modes of social reproduction and class formation were encouraged - even though they served the interests of a minority class comprising mainly the educated few, chiefs and a small resident European community.
- (c) Labour migration from the Bechuanaland Protectorate to South Africa did not constitute "economic exploitation", as some social scientists maintain, but rather provided the majority of peasants with an opportunity to pursue income-generating economic activities in a relatively prosperous neighbouring country. Our studies indicate that many migrants were mainly interested in generating income from these pursuits and returning to engage in more self-sustaining economic ventures, like cattle production, thus gaining access to "enclave" colonial development programmes.
- (d) It is not colonialism per se that resulted in "underdevelopment" in the Bechuanaland Protectorate. Relative poverty in the colonial period was a consequence of the uneven development of capitalist agriculture due to class-orientated internal contradictions of development. We indicate in Chapters 2 and 3 that the conflict that emerged between the expansion of the cattle and beef industry, on the one hand, and social welfare, on the other, was a reflection of the enterprising ability of an emerging middle class and the failure by the colonial administration to broaden the set of beneficiaries in the wake of a rapidly expanding technological drive resulting from the introduction of British borehole technology.
- (e) We indicate in Chapters 4 and 5 that the modern bourgeois ruling coalition that assumed political power in 1966, after the departure of colonial rulers, tried, in principle, but failed to effect a mass-based "progressive" agrarian transformation process. This was partly due to the resilience of a historically sanctioned (exclusionary) process of social stratification whose predominance dates back to some two or three centuries (see Chapters 2 and 3), and mainly due to the "capture of the state" by a rich peasant class, with intensely strong interests in cattle production - with the connivance and assistance of an urban-based salariat strata. Besides sharing a common interest in the livestock sub-sector, both the former and the latter have strong patriarchal foundations.
- (f) Reform programmes aimed at promoting rural development paradoxically weakened local social control over access to the resource base as both economic decision-

making and the enjoyment of mineral rents became the preserve of a hegemonic ruling class.

- (g) The re-structuring of rural institutions and property rights, as suggested in Chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis, resulted in the distortion of the private costs of resource use through the introduction of agricultural subsidies.
- (h) Finally, the tendency for distribution inequalities to persist in Botswana, in the face of changing governments, from the pre-colonial period to the present, reflects a dominant Tswana discourse that has been responsible for reproducing cultural and institutional rigidities opposed to the evolution of a just society. Chapter 5 and 6 discusses this theme in a more comprehensive way.

Although our analyses are persuasive, there appear to be certain areas in the national historiography of Botswana which call for further and more detailed analytical and theoretical inquiry. In my view the following particularly need to be examined:

- (a) A systematic study of the remittance behaviour of Botswana migrants during the colonial period, including their motivations and preferences, fundamental benefits to remitees and the territory at large may further assist us to better comprehend the underdevelopment theorists' "economic exploitation thesis". The benefits of this phenomenon to South Africa must also be examined and evidence for the possibility of autonomous (internal) development without reliance on the latter's labour markets explored.
- (b) The huge accumulation of foreign reserves by the BDP Government need to be examined in terms of opportunity costs. Of particular help to policy analysis would be the question of Government's policy foresight, strategy and commitment to social welfare for both the present generation and posterity i.e. sustainable development.
- (c) Although the issue of how the BDP Government managed to remain in office for over thirty years in spite of increasing poverty is discussed in this thesis, there clearly is a need for further research; especially within the context of the democracy/ development debate.

Endnotes to Chapter Two

1. A number of contributions to this tradition of underdevelopment theory in Botswana have sought to affirm the arguments advanced earlier on by Parson. Among these are: Picard (1985 and 1987), Cooper (1982) and Molutsi (1986).
2. Tswana chiefs were so opposed to colonisation by the British South Africa Company (BSACO.) that a delegation of three chiefs was dispatched to London in 1895 to register their discontent with regard to this matter. The result was a further affirmation of Crown rule. For details see Campbell and Tlou (1984) and also Crowder (1985).
3. Recent studies show that income-maintenance strategies pursued by rural households, and closely complemented by massive transfer entitlement guarantees from private and public sources, resemble Tswana primitive forms of redistribution, including the much criticised political paternalism of state welfare policy (see Valentine (1993a and 1993b).
4. A more sophisticated multi-disciplinary approach to the study of the evolution of African capitalism has emerged in the last couple of years and it is gaining popularity largely due to its departure from the economic determinism of the 1960's. This political economy approach equally emphasises the contribution of non-economic factors to the latter process. Examples include, among others; Iliffe (1983), Sender and Smith (1986) and Kennedy (1988 and 1994).
5. Actually, the so-called "realistic" historians are in essence mainstream social historians whose works are "more narrowly-focused, empirically-driven local studies inspired by a 'social history' perspective...." Murray (1994, p.13).
6. It is important to note that most neo-Marxian historians writing within the Southern African context tend to concentrate on the alleged "exploitative" nature of South African sub-imperialism. By so doing they more often than not underplay the theoretical significance of one crucial tenet of dependency theory, viz; the enduring centre-periphery dichotomy. The question of whether there is any continual correlative relationship between South African accumulation and the historical evolution of western capitalism remains very much a moot one.
7. This view is not entirely correct. British interest in mineral development in Bechuanaland was, contrary to conventional thinking, very profound. See the following for details: Crowder (1985); Johnson (1981); Boocock (undated); Barratt (undated) and Smit (1973).

8. It should be noted that Tswana chiefs made two unsuccessful efforts to be incorporated into the British Empire prior to the granting of Protectorate status. For details see Campbell and Tlou (1984). It is clear that from the beginning Britain was aware of the fact that the Tswana territory was of low economic significance in relation to its imperialist interests in Southern Africa. But having recognised the strategic position of the Tswana, the only logical thing to do was to help advance the territory's economic development so that it did not become an unnecessary burden the Treasury. These efforts to help the Protectorate is manifest in the commitment to the cattle industry by the colonial administration. Cattle were considered the economic boat of the Protectorate by both the colonial administration and the indigenous population.
9. The author's opinion is that this possibility to "cross a development threshold", was a result of the success and not the failure of capitalism in colonial Botswana. Colonialism did not "preserve" the pre-capitalist relations of production in the Protectorate as claimed by underdevelopment theorists. The introduction of ox wagons, ploughs, borehole technology, veterinary services, educational institutions under the firm regime of *Pax Britannica* significantly transformed rural relations and gave character to post-independence agrarian transition in Botswana.
10. The "articulation" of modes of production thesis comes from the French school of Marxist anthropology. According to the latter, the existing domestic mode of production in the colonial African societies was subordinate to the capitalist one. The domestic mode, however, was not completely destroyed but negatively affected by the dominant capitalist mode of production. In other words whatever remained of the pre-capitalist mode of production was to the advantage of capitalism. By "articulation" is thus meant the preservation of modified pre-capitalist modes of production together with a dominant capitalist one (Foster-Carter, 1976; Wolpe, 1980 and Taylor, 1979).
11. This rather lengthy quotation is a paraphrased version of Parsons' (1981) thesis on the articulation of Cape mercantile capitalism with primitive forms of Tswana cattle semi-feudalism on the eve of the advent of British occupation.
12. See Chapman (1971). However, it is interesting to observe that current investigations into the plight of these marginalised people point towards a direction that may have serious political ramifications in the future. A recent publication examining the process of ethnogenesis, 'whereby the ethnic identity constructed and imposed by politically dominant peoples upon a number of subordinated and disparate peoples in the nineteenth century has become a source of pride and a political tool in the twentieth century' has brought to the fore a challenging debate. According to this thesis, the

same ascribed and stigmatised ethnic identity that was used to exclude these people from participating in various socio-economic and political activities has now been adopted for self-identification. The result is that members of the marginalised communities use this new identity to challenge their dominant neighbour's moral claims to political hegemony. For further information see Solway (1994b) and Motzafi-Haller (1994).

13. The population data are imprecise and should not be taken to mean anything other than just a rough estimation. The 1970/71 population census puts the number of Batswana at some 600,000 people. It is highly unlikely that Botswana's population would have doubled so soon.
14. For a detailed understanding of the paradoxes of economic dependency in a colonial political economy see Marks (1986)
15. Archaeological findings and Portuguese historical sources show that trade contacts between inhabitants of Botswana and Europeans actually date as far back as the 15th century and possibly even earlier. See Denbow (1986).
16. Metal-working among the Batlhaping group of Tswana - speakers is well-documented. For reference see Campbell and Tlou (1984). Also refer to a recent article by Miller (1994).
17. This figure is provided by Colclough and McCarthy (1980) for the year 1932. According to another observer "the cost of borehole drilling, exclusive of equipping, increased considerably faster than the cost of living... from £100 per bore (sic) in 1927 to an average of some £1000 in 1960" (Lawry, 1983, p. 5).
18. Research on the remittance behaviour of Tswana migrants is still patchy but for a stimulating start to this debate (see Lucas and Stark, 1985).
19. Colclough and McCarthy (1980) argue that because of the stringent provisions of these proclamations: "Chiefs could no longer impose tribal levies without written approval from the Resident Commissioner and without the agreement of the tribe in Kgotla [tribal assembly], and they were obliged to carry out all "lawful" orders issued to them by the Resident Commissioner" (p. 25). It should be noted that at the attainment of independence these powers were fully vested in the Minister for Local Government and Lands. The unfortunate consequence of this deliberate retention of an aspect of colonial legacy that carries little favour among most tribal authorities has remained an

acrimonious and often very embarrassing atmosphere of distrust, disobedience and occasionally outright political rebellion (see Ngongola, 1992a and Frimpong, 1986).

20. Various detailed studies, covering among other things, the impact of Seretse's marriage to Ruth Williams on Botswana's nationalist politics have come out in the last few years (see Duffield, 1990, Henderson, 1990 and Wylie, 1990).
21. Chief Bathoeng of the Ngwaketse people resigned from the chairmanship of the House of Chiefs to lead the Marxist-Leninist Botswana National Front. At a heated meeting of the House in November 1965, he moved, after only a few hours notice:

That the House of Chiefs... do hereby pass a vote of no confidence in the existence of this House and therefore requests: (a) the dissolution of the House of Chiefs in its present form; (b) that the House be reconstituted to have six elected members of standing outside the chieftainship; (c) that a parliament for Bechuanaland be constituted with two Houses, namely a House of chiefs and a House of Assembly (Proctor, 1968 p. 66).

The call for the House of chiefs to have legislative authority instead of a purely advisory role was unsuccessful.

Endnotes to Chapter Three

1. For more details refer to the previous chapter. See also Picard (1980) and Parson (1984).
2. Holm (1971 and 1972) first observed this trend in the 1970s, but his calls for corrective measures went unheeded.
3. Actually, the size of the national herd of cattle in Botswana has increased roughly tenfold since the beginning of the century despite the rinderpest epidemic of 1895 which decimated an estimated 95% of the national herd and the calamitous drought of 1960/1965 (see Hendrick and Sterkenberg, 1987 and Colclough and Fallon, 1983).
4. Sir Seretse Khama, as quoted in the National Assembly Official Report (HANSARD, 1970).
5. It has been suggested that "no one has a good word for blueprint development". The idea that rural development can be "stencilled whole-cloth from pre-made plans and blueprints" has also been questioned seriously. A further suggestion recommends the abandonment of blueprint development in favour of "a learning process approach, one that conceives development as trial and error...." (see Roe, 1991, p. 207).

6. For a more theoretically stimulating analysis of the impact of both nature (i.e. climatology) and man on the environment of Botswana refer to Cooke (1978, 1979 and van Vegten, 1979).
7. The author is most indebted to Roe (1991, p. 288) for this interesting literary interpretation of Hardin's theory of the "tragedy of the commons".
8. See RoB (1970) and subsequent National Development Plans.
9. James Leach left Kenya in 1973 after pioneering one of the most radical post-independence land reform programme in that country. As the Chief Advisor to the Special Rural Development Programme (SRDP), his contribution to the reform process was crucial albeit controversial as evidenced by his acrimonious departure from Kenya. The latter development owed as much to his inability to appreciate the realities of post-independence Kenyan political anxieties and expectations as it was a product of misplaced "democratic" idealism borne of previous experience with traditional democratic institutions and ideologies among the Igbo people of eastern Nigeria. It is these political inadequacies, among other things, which landed Leach in trouble with the Kenyan authorities. As he now reminisces about his "failures" in Kenya:

... somehow we had lost my Permanent Secretary's support... you see, that was the point, that somehow I had lost the PS's ear, which I never did... in Botswana [Leach, 1987, Interview].

It is Leach's fit with the political environment and his close association with Quett Masire (now Sir Ketumile and His Excellency the President of the Republic of Botswana) that best explains his role as the chief architect of TGLP. His political naivete and insensitivity to various social, economic and cultural implications of land reforms made him vulnerable to manipulation by politicians and bureaucrats intent on using the agency of the state to promote their own interests in the cattle industry.

10. A biographical assessment of Leach's profile alarmingly reveals that he is neither a farmer by experience nor a scholar by profession. While working in Kenya he consistently complained that use of "technical language" by his colleagues hampered his progress. He admits, in an interview, to having first "heard" of Hardin's theory of the "tragedy of the commons" in 1975-at a time he was already busy implementing one of the most radical land reforms inspired by the same theory, i.e. TGLP!

11. For a discussion of democracy and consultation by various writers associated with the Botswana Democracy Project see the following Holm and Molutsi (1989), Mokopakgosi and Molomo (1991) and Botswana Society (1992).
12. Haralambos and Heald (1982) provide a very significant and incisive analysis of the significance of manifest and latent intentions in the interpretation of human behaviour.
13. Chapter 2 of this thesis provides a detailed analysis of the historical evolution of exclusive rights to landownership in Botswana.
14. The "Outsider" doctrine claims that knowledge about institutions and groups is only accessible to outsiders who are assumed to be unprejudiced and unbiased by membership in them (see Merton, 1972). This conception was probably influenced by the sociological perspectives on the significance of objectivity in academic research.

Endnotes to Chapter Four

1. Botswana has been less eager to pursue policies of localisation and indigenisation compared to other African countries such as Nigeria and Zambia for instance. But following the 1977 commission on localisation, and the evolution of an economic policy for the enhancement of local economic opportunities on this subject (see RoB, 1982a), the basis for broader participation in the national economy was laid by the national intelligentsia.
2. In the next two Chapters there is a detailed discussion of the radicalisation of Botswana politics since 1984 and the role played by the rural sector in the rise of this phenomenon.
3. Parkinson discusses the process of state accumulation but there is little in the chapter with respect to the political implications of the economic processes discussed; a theme that is covered in the present Chapter.
4. Botswana Daily News (Wednesday May 7, 1975, p. 1).
5. The BMC sets both quota and prices to ensure a constant supply of beef to the abattoirs. Its focus on favourable international markets and the concomitant policy to aim at high producers' prices have led to beef prices skyrocketing to well above the world market level (up to 32%) (Arntzen, 1990).
6. Botswana Daily News (February 26, 1975, p. 1).

7. Botswana Daily News (February 20, 1975, p. 1).
8. Botswana Daily News (February 20, 1975, p. 1).
9. Opposition claims that Botswana's foreign reserves have been mismanaged and that excess accumulation of this nature by a country that is highly under-industrialised and not self-sufficient in food production is a misplaced economic adventure have generally won a lot of sympathy and support within Botswana.
10. The Botswana Government earns its revenues from diamonds as mineral royalties, taxation of Debswana profits, and as its fifty-one percent share of dividends declared by the Debswana Company; altogether this is estimated to total around seventy-five percent of Debswana's profits.
11. See Kossoudji and Mueller (1983), Colclough and Fallon (1983), Srivastava (1989), Currey (1987), Valentine (1993a and 1993b) and Good (1992, 1993 and 1994).
12. Conceptually, it is illogical to refer to peasants as a class. Peasant society in the Third World is always heterogeneous due to ethnic, religious, customary, age, sex, political and economic differences. Generally, the category of a "specific peasant economy" is not useful for rigorous analytical purposes. It may be useful to regard peasants as a "part society" when defined say by their subordinate relationships to institutions like external markets, a dominant culture, and the state, but the internal dynamics of differentiation within this "part society" entity need not be overlooked. The same "differentiation perspective" is applicable to the workers in the Third World. See Harriss (1982), Ellis (1988) and Lenin (1982) for other perspectives on these issues.

Endnotes to Chapter Five

1. For a brief discussion of these issues, see Kalahari Conservation Society (1992).
2. Human Rights Watch/Africa (1994, pp. 2-18) provides a detailed analysis of the historical and legal context of citizenship in Botswana. It discusses the legal constraints affecting minority groups in general and women in particular.
3. Buchan-Smith and Tlogelang (1994) have indicated how the concept of "linking relief and development" does not apply to the situation of the San due to the fact that drought has reduced their welfare to the level of irreversible decline.

4. See Botswana Society (1992) and also Kalahari Conservation Society (1992).
5. Haralambos and Heald (1982) put forward a very persuasive argument concerning the significance of "elective affinities" when addressing the question of causality.

Endnotes to Chapter Six

1. The BNF has increased its presence in Parliament from 1 member in 1969 to 15 members in 1994. In the last general election the BNF captured all the urban constituencies thus pushing the ruling party into rural constituencies.

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